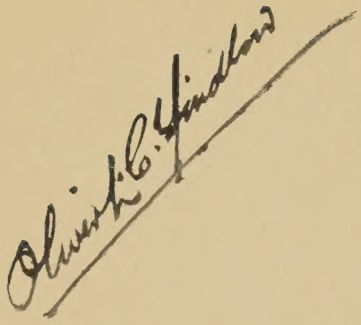

THE BEDE HISTORIES

SERIES III

HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

BY

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VOL. I

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE editors and compilers of this series of history readers are quite alive to the fact that some apology is needed for putting forth yet another book to add to those which are already before the public, many of which are of a high order of historical and literary worth, and are written by competent scholars and experienced teachers. They are sensible that the only justification of their action is to be found in the series in question presenting some feature which is wanting in others and yet is essential to the completeness of a history text-book which aims at giving to children anything approaching to a rightly proportioned conception of the course of development of the nation to which they belong. The particular element which the writers believe to be lacking in the text-books already in existence, and have tried, up to the limit of their powers, to introduce into the present series, is the historical view of the work of the Church in the growth and development of the English nation. Text-books which in regard to the political development show the results of the assimilation of the most advanced thought and learning, are content to leave uncorrected the crudest popular conceptions as to the work of religious institutions and religious beliefs on the shaping of events. Concise and elementary teaching must needs be, even in such a subject as History, in a degree dogmatic; it is the more necessary that the conclusions offered should be based as widely as possible, and that no aspect of the truth should be omitted in framing the considerations to be presented to the immature mind. The general trend of popular thought since Macaulay's day has never succeeded in throwing off the dominance of that brilliant writer, whose writings, Lord Acton asserts, "are a key to half the prejudices of our age." To Macaulay the Church was, one may almost say, an impertinence, as an institution which was in opposition to Whig views. It is a curious fact that this position has often been tacitly accepted by those who are, as individuals, as of course were many Whigs, devoted members of the Church. Hence it has come about that a wholly unhistorical

representation of the position and work of the Church has been almost universally set forth in school histories. That the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were "Dark Ages" in which Englishmen were sunk in ignorance and superstition; that the Bible was never read in England till the sixteenth century; that Henry VIII invented a new and very superior Church; that the position of the Puritans of the seventeenth century was identical with that of the modern Nonconformists, are some of the fallacies to be found, implicit, if not explicit, in most of the elementary history text-books. That this attitude should survive in the work of so many who are really competent scholars can only be explained on the supposition that they look upon "Church History" as something to be treated separately, having an entity apart, with which the general historian can deal only from the outside when it touches upon the political history. The writers of this series believe that it is unscientific to separate the study of the history of the Church from that of the State, with which, for good or for evil, it has been knit up from its beginning.

> "Broadly and deeply planted in the land, mixed up with all our manners and customs, one of the main guarantees of our local government, and therefore one of the prime securities of our common liberties, the Church of England is part of our history, part of our life, part of England itself." [1]

Since it is the hope of the writers to make text-books which will help the young students to realise the life of the people of England in their daily "going out and coming in," it follows as a matter of course that due account must be taken of the institution, the avowed aim of which is to minister to the needs of the inner life, bringing support in temptation and comfort in adversity, by witnessing to the reality of spiritual things, and by keeping alive ideals and fostering aspirations.

These little books would not deserve to claim, in however modest a degree, the name of history, if they contained any special pleading for the Church. Again and again it will be shown how the Church has at times fallen short of her vocation, to hold up to the nation the ideal of righteousness. Yet facts will surely show that it is in no small degree owing to the work of the Church if the history of England can be summed up as

> "Freedom slowly broadening down
> From precedent to precedent."

[1] Disraeli.

The series is named the " Bede Histories " in pious memory of the writer of the first English history, which has to be an " Ecclesiastical " history because, though there was an English Church, there was not yet an English State.

The plan of the series can be explained in a few words. The early volumes are for children under ten, whose study of history can only reach to the kindling of the imagination to realise in some degree how our forefathers lived, and who were the great builders of the mighty structure which is the nation of which they form a part. The middle part of the series is designed for the use of girls and boys of twelve to fourteen, who are at a stage of mental development at which they should be able to trace a thread of continuity, and to connect cause and effect in the great story, which thus, besides giving food for imagination, begins the training of powers of judgment. The Senior books are for the use of those of fifteen and upward, able now to begin to weigh evidence, to ponder on the significance of facts, to cultivate " the gift of historical thinking, which is better than historical learning."

The Senior course has been entrusted to the care of Miss Alice Greenwood, Final Honour School of Modern History, late Head Mistress of Withington High School and author of *Hanoverian Queens of England*, *Voyages and Discoveries retold from Hakluyt*, etc. The other volumes are divided between Miss Adeline Russell, Miss Jane Hubback and the Editor—all of the Cambridge Historical Tripos.

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PREFACE TO VOL. I

THIS volume embodies an endeavour to trace the principal lines of development of the English people until the close of the Middle Ages. That development was so manifold that hardly more than examples can be set down in a volume of small compass. The writer has, therefore, sometimes curtailed the account of military and constitutional affairs as being, perhaps, fairly familiar, in order to attempt some outline of (1) the Christian and intellectual forces which helped to train the character of the nation and (2) of the growth of that town life which was to become so marked a feature of our later social history. An endeavour has also been made to explain the national relations with the Continent, for recent experience has reminded us that, with regard to these also, "the roots of the Present lie deep in the Past."

A. D. G.

1920.

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HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

VOL. I. 55 *B.C. TO A.D.* 1485

I

BRITAIN AND THE ROMANS

THE greatest nation of the ancient world, the Romans, had already gathered under its rule the warm countries surrounding the Mediterranean when the greatest of the Romans, Julius Cæsar, first brought our island into direct relations with that civilised world. He had been extending the Roman dominion over the cooler countries north of the Alps and west of the Rhine—modern Switzerland and France, Alsace-Lorraine and Belgium—and he found that the people of Belgica, the land between the Seine and the Rhine mouths, obtained so much help from their kinsmen, the Belgae of southern Britain, that it might be wise to subdue this island also.

Not very much is known about Britain before the coming of the Romans. They found it a chilly, foggy country, much of it dark with thick forest, full of wide rivers and with large stretches of marsh land; altogether far more watery than now. It appeared to be thickly peopled in the open parts, at least in the south, where a great deal of corn was grown.

It is now clear that three distinct migrations had brought human inhabitants to this land, to dispute its possession with the wolves, bears, boars, and wild cats which haunted the forests and preyed on the wild game.

First had come, in some unknown, far-away period, a race of small, dark people, called the Neolithic or Iberian race; workers of stone and flint, of which they made tools and weapons. They buried their dead in long-shaped barrows, and they may have formed many of the ancient camps upon the downs and moors, for the wild beasts compelled them to place their homes in the open.

Next, but much later, came an invasion of tall, fair-haired Celts, usually called Goidels, or Gaels, who conquered the little dark people or drove them away into the mountains of the north

and west, where they could hide and where they scooped hollows in the hills for houses. There used to be tales in Scotland of a mysterious little people who dwelt inside the mountains and only came out at night to graze their tiny cattle or to steal children to be their slaves. They possessed heaps of gold, but they were fairies, and it was dangerous to have anything to do with them.

The Goidels made their principal implements of bronze, they could make pottery, and must have been skilful engineers if, as is believed, the majority of the hill camps and the great stone circles of Avebury and Stonehenge were of their construction. Their priests were the Druids, who for centuries were credited with magical powers. The Gauls declared that they conjured up fogs to hide their land from enemies. The "druid circles" of stone, and other stone monuments, are Goidelic.

The third race of immigrants was also of Celtic blood. The Brythons understood the use of iron, and with their better weapons they overcame the Goidels and thrust them, in their turn, back to the north and west, where to this day the Goidelic language still survives among their descendants, in the Highlands (Gaelic), the Isle of Man (Manx), and in Ireland (Erse).

The iron-working Celts came over from Europe in two invasions; the first and larger, though consisting of several tribes, were all named by the Romans Brythons, or Britons, a name which they seem to have given to themselves, meaning clothed-people, *i. e.* clothed in cloth, in distinction from the skin-clad Gaels. From them the island, in very early times, took its name of Britain. The Romans, later, said that the Brythons painted themselves when they went to war; perhaps they meant the Gaels of north-eastern Scotland, who certainly did so, and were therefore called by the Romans "Picts," or painted men.

But the Brythons were hardly a savage people. They grew corn, made pottery, mined gold and silver, iron, lead and tin, and could work metal into utensils, weapons and ornaments. They were accustomed to trade with European merchants, and their kings even coined money in imitation of the Greek coins with which these foreign merchants paid. They had all our domestic animals and used to export very fine hunting dogs, as well as slaves, and raw metals smelted into convenient bars and bricks. They lived in little huts of wood, wattle and thatch.

The last body of these Brythons to reach Britain were the tribe of Belgae already mentioned, who came not long before Cæsar's expeditions, and who were in very close connection with their kindred in Belgica. At times one king is even said to have ruled on both sides of the straits. The Belgae settled to the south of the Thames. Opposite to them on the north bank were the British tribe called by the Romans Catuvellauni. Other famous tribes were the Iceni (Norfolk and Suffolk), the Brigantes (between Trent and Forth), and the Ordovices and Silures (in N. and S. Wales),

who no doubt had begun to mingle to some degree with the Goidels, and even with the Iberians.

Well-beaten trackways ran along the dry slopes from one district to another; the most famous are the route now called Watling Street, which the Romans metalled, the Icknield Way from Norfolk to Avebury, and the twisting track from the Solent to Thanet, part of which is now called the Pilgrims' Way, though it is much older than pilgrimages. Perhaps all the different races have trodden these old tracks in turns; they cross no marshes or forests, and few wide streams. From Thanet or Wight the Greek merchants of Marseilles used to fetch the tin prized by continental bronze-workers.

There were, no doubt, always remnants of the earlier races lurking in the forests, or on islands or lake-villages in the swamps and meres, and some of the inhabitants of Britain still got their living by hunting with flint weapons while others were sending oaken boats over sea to arrange with the other Belgae a war-plan against the Romans, or striking gold coins to buy goods from the foreign merchants who ventured on the tide up to the spot where now London Bridge marks the neighbourhood of the ancient ford.

When Cæsar brought a small fleet and army to the shores of Britain, in 55 B.C., the Britons had already received ample warning from Belgica, and a great army was gathered on the cliffs above the place (probably Dover, where there was then a large inlet), where Cæsar seemed to intend landing. He therefore coasted farther and landed on a beach, probably between Deal and Walmer, where his men with great difficulty contrived to land. But the Britons in great numbers beleaguered them in their camp, and as Cæsar had not come provisioned for a long campaign, but had reckoned on reaping the British harvest, he was forced to withdraw to Gaul again as quickly as possible.

He had, however, found the right place to land at, and next year he came again with an army and a fleet so large that the Britons did not venture to oppose the disembarkation. The tribes had combined to form a great army under the lead of the principal king, Cassivelaunos, whose capital is supposed to have been close to St. Albans. They boldly attacked the invaders after they had landed, but the Romans counter-attacked so skilfully that they dispersed the Britons and cleared the way to the Thames. There Cassivelaunos attempted to bar the crossing, but his troops were now afraid, and the Romans forced their way across. After this, disunion and jealousy among the tribes proved Cæsar's best aid. Those jealous of Cassivelaunos offered submission; they were kindly treated and then revealed to the Romans the king's stronghold in the forest, where his wealth of cattle and his reserves were gathered. The taking of his fortress was so severe a blow to the brave chief that he at length offered to submit. Cæsar, having found Britain more warlike than wealthy,

was quite ready to give very easy terms, and so retired to Gaul with the name, but little else, of victory. It was nearly a hundred years before the Romans disturbed the island again.

During that interval the British tribes, or at all events those of the south and east, had become more civilised and accessible. Gaul having become thoroughly romanised, the Britons also became familiar with Latin merchants and travellers. Their kings encouraged trade, and so the habits and the trackways of the Britons became well known. When, in A.D. 43, the Emperor Claudius decreed the conquest of Britain, and his first army reached our shores, a determined resistance was led by Caradoc (Caratacus), king of the Catuvellauni. He was the son of King Cymbeline and probably the great grandson of Cassivellaunos. But the jealousies among the tribes made the Britons their own worst foes. Tribe after tribe joined the invaders, so as to secure specially good treatment for themselves and to see Caradoc deposed. When he could no longer defend his own district he went to the Silures and Ordovices and so inspirited them that they proved impossible to subdue; but when he went on to rouse the Brigantes the queen of that tribe had him put in chains and given up to the Romans, to purchase from them her own independence. Caradoc and his family were carried off to Rome and shown as trophies of victory. There the good-natured Claudius granted them life and freedom, and the story is told how the British king, beholding the glories of the magnificent city, exclaimed: "And yet the owners of all this must needs covet our poor huts in Britain!" There is some ground for thinking that the Christian Claudia, the wife of Pudens, may have been his granddaughter.

It took the Romans the greater part of a century to subdue Britain. They pushed steadily northwards and westwards, under a series of able generals, building, as they advanced, their firm roads along the lines of the British trackways, and holding down each district won by a number of fortified camps. Under the best of these generals, Agricola, the Britons of Wales were at last reduced by the bold manœuvre of taking troops by sea to the west coast and then cooping the natives in the mountains, between two forces on west and east. Then they gave in, but, like those of Cornwall, were little interfered with by the victors so long as they remained nominally loyal.

Even Agricola, however, could not subdue the Picts, who inhabited the Highlands of Scotland. He sent his fleet right round the coast and islands; he ran a great road into the midst of the Lowlands, and built camps and forts, but none of these (*e. g.* at Carrawburgh and Newstead) became, as they often did in England, the core of a permanent city, and the nature of the country convinced Agricola that it was not worth while to exhaust his troops in that cold climate in order to rule a scanty population of barbarians. He therefore built a line of forts

from the Clyde to the Forth, to keep the northern tribes from attacking the settled Roman province, and devoted his energies to persuading the Britons south of it to settle down in civilisation.

There were still some risings of chiefs, but none so serious as those which had occurred before Agricola's time, when the harshness of the conquerors had provoked the heroic revolt (A.D. 60) of the queen of the Iceni, Boadicea (Boudicca), who succeeded in destroying the Roman towns of London, Colchester and Verulam before she was defeated.

From the time of Agricola the Romans were able to settle Britain, south of the Tees and east of the Welsh central mountains, on their usual system.

They built a number of towns, where lived not only the soldiers and their families, but civilians and eminent Britons. The soldiers were by no means usually Italians; they were enlisted in all parts of the world, and, when they were settled in Britain, no doubt took British wives. Later, some of the British recruits were, apparently, allowed to enter the legions in this country. There was, then, a considerable mixture of race, but the one language of all was necessarily Latin.

A number of our towns trace their origin to the Romans, whether they were originally camps, or from the beginning civilian and mercantile centres. Some were certainly the older tribal centres, rebuilt and fortified by the Romans. It was safer to have the tribesmen resorting to their chiefs under the eye of the Roman governors. In time these towns became as much British as Roman, the inhabitants really British, the appearance, culture and management, Roman.

They are always well placed: at the head of a harbour, like Chester, Chichester, Lincoln—the sea ran inland then by many inlets long since silted up—or on some slope which afforded a wide prospect, or on the natural routes which the Romans made into magnificent metalled streets, running as far as possible in straight lines. The Romans invariably marched on high ground whence they could view the possible enemy; they were great bridge-builders and drove roads through forests and across rivers which the British tracks had carefully avoided. They even constructed enormous banks and drains to confine the waters of the great marshes in channels and to keep out the sea, by the Wash and in Somerset. The Roman drains and banks, and some of the roads and bridges, served for over a thousand years, during which men practically lived on what the Roman Empire had bequeathed.

But in spite of the success of the conquerors in civilising their subjects, they were unable to retain all that Agricola had intended. The northern limit of the Roman province had to recede before the vigour of the Picts, and the Emperor Hadrian traced, and Severus completed, between the Tyne and the Solway, the gigantic wall studded with forts, of which the remains can be seen to this day.

This wall was the bulwark of a permanent garrison cantonned from Carlisle to Newcastle, with earthworks to protect its rear and roads to serve its convoys. From the Wall to about York and Manchester the province was military; south of the Mersey and Humber it was civilian and comfortably civilised.

As the centuries progressed, manufactures of pottery flourished. Much mining of iron, lead, and tin was carried on in the Forest of Dean, in Sussex, Somerset, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Cornwall, and Wales, and the forests supplied fuel for smelting. Buxton and Bath (Aquæ Sulis) became health resorts, and the ports, such as Richborough, Dover, Lympne, Pevensey, Chichester, Porchester, must have been incessantly busy with traffic. Some of their ports were long ago washed away, or left stranded inland, by the changing tides, and all their towns were, for a time at least, ruined when the barbarian Saxons invaded the land. But during the four centuries of Roman rule the system of the island was a city civilisation. The rulers of each district, military and civil, lived in the towns. There were the markets and the temples, for the Romans succeeded in representing the native deities as being really the same as the Roman gods. Rivers were bridged and roads made to branch at cities. The population of the eastern part of England was largely congregated in, or near to, the towns. But in the warm southern districts which the Roman officials liked best they built many of the famous *villas* which were, everywhere, the homes of the wealthy. These were large, luxurious houses surrounded by every kind of farm and pleasure land, with buildings for slaves and servants. During the third and fourth centuries a network of smaller roads connected the great main roads, and many small towns must have existed along their lines. It was an era of much prosperity, and corn and metals were exported regularly, as well as pearls and slaves and hunting dogs. London was the largest of the towns and a thriving port.

Nevertheless, at the same time there were still Celtic tribesmen among the hills and woods living in their ancient style, even lake-dwellers in Somerset, and hunting tribes who used only bronze implements; and these purely country people must have spoken only their own language, though wherever the Roman soldiers came the people had to pick up Latin, and naturally the chiefs and the richer Britons became latinised and had their children brought up in the towns with the education of the Romans.

About the end of the second century the most important teaching which the Roman Empire had to bestow, Christianity, penetrated quietly to the Britons. Probably the persecution of the Christians, under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, in southern Gaul, drove many to fly from their homes, and there had long been commercial intercourse between that region and southern Britain. The faith was taught to both Romans and Britons, and the first known martyr of the British church is the Roman soldier, Albanus, who suffered

at Verulam, and whose memory was so deeply revered there that his name afterwards superseded that of the Roman town, which has for ages been renamed from the church dedicated to his memory, St. Albans. The early Christians in Britain, as in other lands, felt great reverence for the martyrs and saintly missionaries who converted them, and most of our very early churches were dedicated in memory of them, or of the famous Gallic bishop of Tours, St. Martin, who, though he never came to these shores, was the inspirer of others, especially of St. Ninian, the first apostle of the Picts. Ninian (about 400) built in Galloway a church of white stones and dedicated it in memory of his master, Bishop Martin, who died just at that time. This stone building, conspicuous from the sea, seemed so remarkable to the wild Picts that the place took a name from it and is to this day called Whithern (white house). Many of the Picts and of other Gaels, who had migrated from Scotia, or Ireland (and who were therefore called Scots) were converted by Ninian, and Whithern became their Christian centre.

It seems that in Britain, Christianity spread chiefly among the poorer inhabitants. Churches were built certainly in several, possibly in most, of the Roman towns, but they were not so large as the older pagan temples and very few remains of them have been found.

There were at least three British bishoprics, at London and York, the two most important towns in Britain, and at Lincoln; perhaps at other places also. And in the fourth and fifth centuries there was considerable intercourse between the British Christians and the better educated clergy of Gaul, which was then, as at many later epochs, the land to which the Britons looked for teaching and inspiration. Sometimes even Rome was reached, and still more distant places—Constantinople, Palestine, Egypt—so that there was always the feeling of union with a great and inspiring community.

But in the north and west of Britain Christianity spread and was organised in a manner different from the episcopal system which prevailed all over the Roman empire, but resembling the system of Ireland. Who first brought the Faith to Ireland and to the Goidelic tribes of the British west is not known. Very possibly Greek missionaries, perhaps from the old, half-Greek cities of southern Gaul round the Gulf of Lions; or maybe slaves carried off in the slave raids which Irish pirates constantly executed on Britain or Gaul. At all events the Irish (properly called *Scots*) received the Faith with enthusiasm, and, like the later Welsh, adopted it into their native system of society. Ireland the Romans had never conquered, though they were acquainted with the Irish coasts through merchants and explorers, so that the native tribal system had never been disturbed. The people were pastoral, and lived, not in towns, but scattered over the country. Each tribe held its own district, shared

its land in common, and submitted to the jurisdiction of its chief in almost patriarchal fashion. The Christian converts banded together as companies of monks, built humble monasteries of wood and thatch to shelter their abbot and themselves, and from these centres preached their new faith among their fellow-tribesmen. They were treated as a kind of spiritual family or tribe, whose chief was the abbot. A few would be ordained bishops, but they too continued to live in the convent and to be subject to the abbot. There were neither sees nor parish churches.

The most famous missionary of Ireland was a Briton, Patricius, or Patrick, who had been carried off from a small town in Wales in a slave raid and sold in Ireland, where he was for some time a swineherd. When he became free he went to Gaul to be trained for the Christian ministry that he might help to convert more of the Irish, and at last he returned thither as bishop (432), and spread the Faith rapidly in Connaught and in other parts of the island.

More than a century later the famous St. Columba emigrated from Ireland to the west of North Britain, which was also a Scotic region, and there founded the renowned monastery of Hy or Iona, from which, in turn, went forth the missionaries who converted, first the Picts, and afterwards the Angles of northern England.

It is difficult to comprehend how so much spiritual, and also commercial, activity could develop in Britain in the midst of the incessant warfare recorded of the four centuries of the Roman era. No sooner had the British accepted romanisation than the generals, with their troops, began to rebel against the imperial government and served this country, which provided them with some of their devoted soldiers, a very ill turn by taking their armies away to fight on the continent, just when they were urgently required in Britain.

For Britain had hardly become a settled Province before the barbarians who, all over Europe, were incessantly attempting to plunder the rich cities and farms of the Empire, began to lay hands on Britannia very successfully during the fourth century. There were (*a*) Picts from modern Scotland, (*b*) Scots, or Irish pirates—"the sea foamed with hostile oars"—and (*c*) pirates called Saxons, from the North Sea shore between Denmark and the Rhine mouths. The imperial government organised a strong defence; the Wall was made almost impregnable; fortifications were everywhere repaired and even the gates narrowed. A *Dux Britanniarum* was appointed to control the north; the coast from the Wash to the Solent was defended by special troops and by a new line of forts, under a "Count of the Saxon shore." But so desperate was the struggle that these two generals were both slain in one year (367).

Nevertheless the invaders were driven out and the province restored, first by the great general Theodosius, next by the famous Stilicho, and the Romano-Britons of the west (Wales) seem to have been encouraged to organise themselves and to fight in their own

way under their native chiefs. This was a wise step, for already an ambitious general had taken to Europe the pick of the troops, and at the beginning of the fifth century the imperial government was compelled to withdraw most of the troops from Britain. In 410 the Emperor Honorius exhorted the Britons to defend themselves and ceased to treat the island as any longer a province of the Empire.

When no protection was left, and there were no imperial officials to conduct government, it is almost obvious that many civilians—merchants and bankers, lawyers and tax-collectors—would withdraw from the abandoned province if they could. Many villas had already been deserted; many forts and towns in the north lay ruined. Now that the Wall and the Saxon Shore were unguarded except by Romano-Britons, probably incompletely armed and trained, certainly unused to initiative and combination, the land lay open to the enemy. After long fighting the British princes of the west succeeded in clearing out the Irish pirates, or Scots, from the region between the Clyde, and its fortress of Alcluyd (now Dumbarton), and the Severn mouth, and in erecting fairly stable principalities in this region. But the Scots or their allies, the Picts, had first harried the cultivable lands and burned the towns as far as mid-Shropshire, including, apparently, Chester and Wroxeter. They had also reached the heart of Yorkshire, but here they met with a sudden check. The British Church had sent to the Church of Gaul to beg that a learned teacher might come to expound certain difficulties of doctrine, and reply to the famous heresies of Pelagius, and in response came Germanus, the saintly bishop of Auxerre. In earlier life he had been an officer in the Roman army, and when the British implored him to save them he was able to take command. Placing the defending troops where the lie of the ground concealed them, he let the Picts advance into their midst and then gave the signal for attack with the cry of *Hallelujah!* The British sprang from ambush, echoing the shout, and the Picts, almost surrounded, were slain or fled.

But this victory gave a respite from only one foe; there was no deliverance from the terrible Saxon pirates. The almost undefended land offered not only spoil, but the prospect of easy settlement. Already the Scots had colonised Galloway and the western isles of the land which afterwards came to be named after them, *Scotland;* the Saxons also, about 440, resolved to migrate to the country they had been pillaging.

PRINCIPAL EVENTS

B.C. 55, 54.	Cæsar's invasions.
A.D. 5–40.	Cymbelinus, king in S. Britain.
43.	Claudius decrees conquest of Britain.
60.	Revolt of Boudicca.

c. 123.	Hadrian's Wall (Tyne to Solway, turf). Antoninus' Wall (Forth to Clyde, turf).
180–90.	Pictish raids.
c. 200.	Christianity reaches Britain.
208.	Severus in Britain. Hadrian's Wall rebuilt (stone).
286–93.	The Admiral Carausius revolts in Britain.
315, 359.	British bishops attend Church Councils at Arles and Rimini.
300–400.	Raids of Picts, Scots and Saxons. York and Chester sacked.
369.	Theodosius restores the Province.
383.	Magnus Maximus revolts in Britain. Legions withdrawn.
c. 395.	Stilicho restores the Province.
c. 397.	St. Ninian founds Whithern.
402–7.	Withdrawal of the last legions.
410.	Honorius bids the Britons defend themselves. [End of the Roman government of Britain.]
429.	St. Germanus. Hallelujah victory.
c. 432.	St. Patrick in Ireland.
c. 385–400 ?	Cunedda rules in West Britain.
400–500.	Saxon and English raiders make settlements.

PRINCIPAL ROMAN TOWNS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Coloniæ. (4)

York (Eburacum, *English*, Eoforwic).
Lincoln (Lindum Colonia).
Colchester (Camulodunum).
Gloucester (Glevum).

also

London (Londinium).
Chester (Deva).
St. Albans (Verulamium).

Tribal Centres.

Canterbury (Durovernum Cantiacorum).
Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum).
Winchester (Venta Belgarum).
Cirencester (Corinium or Durocornovium).
Caister by Norwich (Venta Icenorum).
Caerleon-on-Usk (Isca Silurum).
Exeter (Isca Dumnoniorum), *and others.*

Forts of the Saxon Shore.

Porchester (Portus Adurni ?).
Pevensey (Anderida).
Lympne (Portus Lemanis).
Dover (Dubrae).
Richborough (Rutupiae).
Reculver (Regulbium).
Othonae (now submerged, by Bradwell near Ipswich).
Burgh Castle by Yarmouth, (Gariononum).
Brancaster (Branodunum).

All towns ending in chester, caster, cester, as—

Rochester.
Doncaster.
Dorchester.
Manchester.
Lancaster.
Leicester.

and

Carlisle (Luguvallium, Caerluel).
Newcastle (Pons Aelius).
Wallsend.
Bath (Aquae Sulis, Bathonceaster)
Grantchester by Cambridge (Camboricum).
Bittern by Southampton (Clausentum).
Monmouth.

and many other smaller places.

II

THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH

THE early history of the Saxons, Angles and Jutes—the three allied tribes commonly called *Anglo-Saxons*—is extremely obscure. It is believed that in the first century A.D. they were dwelling in the lands on either side of the Elbe estuary, and in Schleswig, and that during the universal migrations which disturbed Europe from the third to the fifth century, they had slowly travelled westwards, some tribes to Frisia, and others to the lower Rhine and the Rhine mouths. Some seafaring adventurers took to raiding Britain as the nearest prey; others were simply emigrants with their families, who crossed to the opposite coast and settled down when no further expansion on land was open to them.

The traditions of the British of Wales relate that in the middle of the fifth century (445?) a British over-king, Weorthgeorn or Vortigern, planned to play off the Saxon pirates against the northern Picts and took an army of them into his pay under two "Jutish" princes, Hengist and Horsa, assigning to them Thanet as a camping place.

These Saxons (or else Jutes) soon defeated the Picts, and thoroughly, as it would seem from Pictish raids being no longer heard of. But on their long marches they had perceived how good a country was Britain and how unable its now scanty inhabitants were to defend it, and they therefore refused to leave Kent, fought and slew Vortigern and sent word to the rest of their tribes to desert their less happy homes by the North Sea or the Rhine mouths and emigrate to Britain. With a common consent all came, making so rapid a descent on the country that a Gaulish chronicler actually dated their conquest of this island as accomplished in one year (441).

The *Saxons* and *Angles* were very much alike in their customs, and after they had settled down in the new country, both called themselves Saxons or English impartially, though the British, whom the invaders called *Welsh* (foreigners), called all their enemies *Saxons*. The Jutes, whether they came from Jutland or from the Belgian coast, seem to have spoken much the same language as the two larger tribes, though some of their customs were different and even resembled those of the British. But the names *Hengist* and *Horsa* recall the White Horse which was the emblem of Old Saxony

(Hanover) until modern times, and which appeared on the coat-of-arms of our Hanoverian kings. When the Saxons conquered fresh homes along the chalk downs where the British had dwelt, they scraped the turf away to form a white horse on the hillside.

The three tribes were well enough acquainted with Britain to find the waterways up which their boats could go. The Angles directed their "keels" to the inlets of *East Anglia* (Norfolk and Suffolk), or up the Trent and the Humber and their tributaries, or along the low, sandy coasts of Durham and Northumberland as far as to the estuary of the Forth. All the country lying just beyond this coast-line, once the most flourishing part of Roman Britain, had been harried again and again for at least a century, and can have been only very sparsely inhabited. Its remaining towns fell an easy prey and were all burned to the ground, unless possibly Lincoln escaped. The Jutes, who already held *Thanet*, easily acquired the rest of *Kent*, and a second body of them sailed to the Isle of *Wight* and settled there and on the mainland round about the haven of Portsmouth.

The Saxons (A) made for the harbours of *Essex* (East-Saxons) and for the Thames mouth. London seems to have been already deserted and probably was not re-colonised for some time. (B) Another party sailed past Kent and settled the coast from the shallow harbours of *Portus Lemanis*, where the Saxon port is still called *Hythe*, the landing-place, as far as the great Portsmouth haven which gave access to Chichester. The river mouths gave good passage to their boats, and here *Sussex* (South-Saxons) developed in a few generations into a self-sufficing little kingdom hemmed in from the north by the dense forest of the *Andredsweald*. The principal town of the district, *Anderida* (*Pevensey*), they utterly destroyed. (C) Other Saxons evidently pushed westward on the south bank of the Thames, so as to avoid the network of streams, marshes and shallow lakes which spread up the valleys of the Colne and Lea, and which, together with the forests of the Chiltern hills, formed a natural defence for the Romano-Britons. This district which the Saxons settled between the Thames and the Solent became *Wessex* (West-Saxons), but not till much later did Winchester become its capital. When the Saxons crossed the Thames, somewhere near Staines, or perhaps Wallingford, and so turned the Chiltern position, they were able to colonise Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire (as the districts were later named), and then Dorchester and Eynsham were their towns. (D) Other Saxon boats pushed far up the slow waterways which opened into the Wash, and passing the great marshes settled far up the Ouse and Nen (Bedfordshire and Northants), whence they by and by reached the Warwickshire Avon, and so began to trickle into the Severn country. This Middle-Saxon settlement was afterwards named Mercia (border or *march* land).

Judging by the slow pace of the Saxon progress westwards it

seems likely that the Romano-Britons tried to defend the lines of the hills and that when the Chilterns were turned, they evacuated the south central districts, as they already had the Trent valley, and formed their next line of defence along the Cotswolds and the line of the Pennine moors and hills, which they held for a long time. The remains found at Silchester, deserted early in the fifth century, show that the people did not always wait to be massacred, and the line of ancient hill forts from Bath to Gloucester, and those along the Herefordshire Watling Street prove that a tenacious resistance was made in those regions.

By the Anglo-Saxon occupation and their own forced retreat, the British were now completely cut off from the rest of the civilised world. The invaders were heathens and barbarians; and though they might make some of their prisoners slaves, instead of killing them, they entertained no kind of sympathy or respect for their civilisation or religion. The last known communications of the unhappy people with their fellow-Christians took place in 446 to 447, when they contrived to send to the Roman regent, or chief minister, Aetius, a pitiful appeal for help. Soon after, St. Germanus courageously visited the island again, to confirm the faith of the Christians. But Aetius, struggling hopelessly with barbarians himself, had no aid to send; nor could Germanus this time bring any but spiritual comfort. It was about this time that the monastery of Bangor Iscoed, near Wrexham, was founded, to provide for the training of their clergy. St. Germanus' name is preserved in more than one church and town in Wales, Cornwall, and France. Except among a few clerics, Roman culture now vanished in the desperate struggle for existence, and the British became thoroughly Celtic again, with the difference that they now all embraced Christianity, the only Faith able to sustain their hope and courage, though they imported into it a great deal of superstition and mystery, almost like the magic of the Druids.

A century went by with only one recorded important event, and, during the whole of that time, the British were struggling to hold their western refuge (roughly speaking, to the west of Fosse Way, Watling Street and the Pennines), while the Anglo-Saxons were building homes and tilling the good land. With the increase of their numbers fresh farms had to be settled, and about once in a generation the need for new colonies and the thirst for plunder to stock them instigated a forward movement against the British. The one famous event of the period 447–547 is the great fight at the siege of *Mons Badonicus* (516?), "near the mouth of the Severn," and probably not far from Bath, when the British so severely defeated the heathen that some sixty years elapsed before they pushed so far west again.

The British had closed their ranks, it would seem, and for a time laid aside their mutual feuds and jealousies, under the sway

of a great leader called Ambrosius Aurelianus (472? to 516?); but whether he was of Roman blood, and whether he was the same as the mysterious hero called Arthur, is wholly uncertain.

More clearly traceable than the retreat of the British is the slow colonisation of the Anglo-Saxons. Avoiding the blood-stained ruins of Roman towns or villas, and almost as carefully shunning the Roman roads, which, however useful on a raid, facilitated attacks from the enemy, they settled down in fertile places which seemed to promise security. They placed their farms by land-locked harbours, at the fords of the lesser streams, in sheltered nooks among the hills, in clearings among the woods, along the slopes where the springs welled out.

They colonised in small groups, probably as each boat had anchored. Sometimes a numerous family gathered round the home of its head; sometimes a petty chieftain controlled a band of followers; sometimes a group of free men and equals combined to form a village together. It was necessary to dwell in groups, partly for defence, partly for joint action in farm work. The typical Saxon settlement was, therefore, the cluster of houses fenced in with hedge or paling, the *tun* or *ham* (toun, home). It was self-sufficing. The directions of the patriarch, or the chief, or the common agreement of the *ceorls* (freemen) decided what stretch of cleared, arable land was to be ploughed for barley, rye or oats, or perhaps wheat. Every settlement prepared two such portions of land, each of greater extent than would now be thought sufficient to provide a year's corn for a village, for the furrows were wide apart and the crops far thinner than we ever see them now. And as there was never enough manure, one portion lay fallow each year. To ensure fairness, a piece of the ploughed land was assigned to each house, not all in one slice but in a number of strips, such as were formed by the big wooden plough drawn by the team of oxen. There should be eight oxen, yoked in fours, and the community joined together to provide them. Once assigned, the strips of plough-land became the possession of the family and descended for generations, but they were not fenced or hedged in, for the entire stretch of cornland was regularly ploughed from end to end, part in autumn and part in spring. Meadow pasture for the oxen and the few cows and sheep was precious, and the best bits of hay-land came to be fenced in and reserved for the most important persons. There was plenty of rough pasture for all on the untilled hilly ground, and when the crops were reaped the beasts could ramble over the grassy stubble. The remaining scraps of those public pasture grounds are to this day called *commons*. Finally, every settlement had its stretch of wood. Timber, turf and reeds, for building and thatching, or for fuel, were plentiful, for in a few years the cleared land about the ruined Roman towns must have become overgrown with vegetation and even the roads obscured by grass and brushwood. In a

century the woods must have become dense, and then the wild beasts increased—wolves, boars, wild cats, foxes, and deer, as well as eagles and other birds of prey, and otters, beavers and small animals.

The energies of the men must have been usually absorbed by the steady farm-work, and the kindred labours of cutting timber or turf, making implements, or the wooden shoes and leather garments usually worn in the fields. Except for smithy work—and the smith was a distinguished person—every family was practically self-supporting. Each household had its beehives; honey was the sole sweet known, and was in great demand for making the strong mead beloved of the English, who also learned from their Welsh slaves how to brew barley ale. By each house lay its own garden (" garth " or " yard "), where grew the few vegetables then known: parsnips, leeks, or kale, as well as apple-trees and occasionally cherries and pears. The geese were turned out to feed on the common, poultry pecked about the rubbish-heaps, and the pigs of each household were marked and sent out to feed in the wood in charge of the village swineherd. Pork and bacon were a main part of the food supply, and each family cured its own, but in the early days of the Saxon occupation salt was difficult to come by. Milk, butter and cheese were delicacies. To the women and the slaves who served them fell especially two heavy tasks: the grinding of corn in the *querns* or stone handmills (implements introduced to the Britons by the Romans), and the spinning and weaving of the family garments. They must first shear the sheep, of which every well-to-do family would keep a few, for their wool as well as for milking, or grow and gather the flax. Then came the endless task of spinning the thread by the slow process of twisting the tow with the fingers and setting the spindle (much like a teetotum) to spin on the floor to wind the thread. This is the reason for the ancient tales of wonderful spinners and of the prick of the sharp-pointed spindle. Even in the tenth century kings' daughters could become celebrated by their spinning. A daughter of the German emperor Otto I had a golden spindle hung above her tomb to record her fame in the art.

Work must be done by daylight, for torches and candles were only for the wealthy who had slaves to make them. When fire-light died down people went to bed on heaps of straw or skins. For many centuries staying out of doors in the dark was so singular and so dangerous, on account of wild beasts, ghosts and evil spirits (in which everybody believed), that it was considered a suspicious circumstance and enough to prove a man a bad character.

There can have been, then, little time at first for unnecessary warfare and none for travel or exploration, nor did the Saxons journey far afield. Their roads are merely the winding tracks from farm to farm, trampled by man and beast in the natural curves of walking—our country lanes. They twist to keep on the slopes above

flood level, or to follow the edges of the ancient cornfields, and seldom run beyond the neighbouring villages. Whereas the Briton was a huntsman, seeking cover, and the Roman a soldier, marching straight and scanning the horizon, the Saxon was a farmer seeking easy going for his beasts. The Saxon system of life was almost built up on the ox who ploughed the wide field and drew the clumsy carts with their solid wooden wheels. To this day one may travel many miles along Watling Street or any other Roman road without catching a glimpse of the villages which lie concealed from view close by, connected with each other by their own intricate lanes.

The steady increase of population early caused the settlement of more and more villages, so that each of the Anglo-Saxon districts became more thickly inhabited and, within a century and a half from the migration, is found to possess a local name, to have developed special characteristics, and to have become to some degree organised. In particular, the chiefs became kings, but not absolute rulers. Each king had his band of followers, or rather companions (*gesiths*), by whose advice he was expected to act. They were afterwards called his *thegns*, and his council included them and was termed the *Witenagemot*, or Meeting of Wise Men. In war the king was general, and his *gesiths* were expected to be absolutely loyal. They would rather fall round his dead body in hopeless fight than surrender even to the most tempting offers from his foe. The English double conception of the king—as, on the one hand, the representative of the people, descended from its god Woden, its natural leader and spokesman, to whom entire devotion was due, and yet as no autocrat, but bound to attend to the counsels of his chief men in making grave decisions—is a conception that has remained characteristic of the nation and has often moulded its history.

The principal little kingdoms were: Kent, with its two centres, Canterbury and Rochester; Essex, Sussex, Wessex, East Anglia, divided into the North folk and South folk; Mercia, Lindsey (Lincolnshire, north of the fens), Deira (eastern Yorkshire), Bernicia (from the Tees to the Forth). The last two are together called Northumbria. Other English settlers were in the sixth and seventh centuries pushing into the Welsh territories: the Hwicce (in Worcestershire), the Peak-sæte (in Derbyshire). Elmet (the moor-country behind Leeds) was, till King Edwin, British, and all along the west lay the British kingdoms of Strathclyde, Wales, and West-Wales (Cornwall).

The only organisation which the Angles and Saxons had brought with them was the simple one of the family, or of that substitute for the family, the chief and his band of followers. Every hundred families formed a unit for self-defence and for dealing justice, and the district reckoned as occupied by about a hundred families was termed a *hundred* and had a recognised meeting-place, which gave its name to the hundred, where the men would gather in council to settle quarrels or to impose punishments upon those judged to be

Based partly on Leeds's *Archæology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements*. The Early Settlements dotted.

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guilty of wronging others. The *hundred-moot* (or meeting) was the natural place for making any news public or for collecting warriors together for a fight. All the freemen were supposed to be present. Possibly they may, originally, all have been joint judges, shouting out the general opinion as a verdict, but as far back as there are any hints of their doings the chief of the place, or the royal officer (the *reeve*) presided. The laws were old customs which all ought to know; the most important concerned the value of each man's life. They recognised two grades or classes, the noble-born and the free, *eorl* and *ceorl* (*earl* and *churl*), and if a man were killed, accidentally or on purpose, his value, or *wer*, in oxen or in money, had to be paid to his family by the family of the slayer, and the same was done for injury to limbs or private property. This was in order to prevent retaliation and blood feuds.

But with the colonisation of the new country more organisation and new laws were required. Especially when the chief became a permanent king some regular contribution must be made by the community (1) towards the maintenance of his household and his band of warriors, (2) towards the repair of certain roads and bridges necessary for communication with him, and the fortifying of a few places—villages, or houses or hill forts, which served as places of refuge.

For the support of the royal family and officers food was collected from the villages, over all of which the king had, originally, a sort of over-lordship.

It was, moreover, assumed that the land of each family could afford an equal payment, and as the land sufficient for a family was called a *hide*, the hundreds and villages were reckoned as paying to the king at so many *hides*. Where the population was thick the *hides* were numerous, where it was scanty they were few. When people in later times spoke of a *hide*, as they sometimes did, as if it were a definite extent of ground, they reckoned it in some regions as a small measure and in others as a large one. But in government language, from the sixth century to the eleventh, it was an estimate of money, not a measure of extent.

When the separate kingdoms were organised the duties of (*a*) fighting in the army, (*b*) repairing roads, (*c*) building forts, had to be fulfilled, not by payment but by actual service. These are often called the *trinoda necessitas*, or threefold duty.

Little or nothing is known for certain about the earliest kings, but Ælle in Sussex, Ida in Northumbria, Ceawlin in Wessex, were all active before the end of the sixth century; and in 550 the West-Saxons began a fresh war of conquest by taking the Romano-British fortress of (old) Sarum. In 571 Ceawlin annexed south Oxfordshire, and in 577 defeated the British at Dyrham, near Bath, and sacked Bath, Cirencester and Gloucester. But five years later (584) the British inflicted a decisive defeat on him at a place called by the Saxons Fethanleag, and the West-Saxons then

ceased to make further conquests, and turned their energies to feuds at home and wars with the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

In the north, it was not until 613 that Ethelfrith, king of Northumbria, succeeded in inflicting a decisive defeat on the British. His victory at Chester enabled the English to settle in the plain between the Mersey and Dee and so to separate Wales proper from Cumbria.

The erection of so many tiny states had for one result the development of jealousies and quarrels which kept the English kingdoms at war against each other with even more bitterness than they exhibited towards the Welsh. The hatred between the Saxon and British races was merged in a general state of warfare, and the Welsh were always ready to join one English king against another. Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex rarely ceased to war on each other and to try to annex Lindsey, East Anglia, Kent or Sussex.

SOME OF THE ENGLISH PLACE-NAMES AS THEY APPEAR NOW

1. *Settlement names.*

ham = (*a*) home, Oldham; (*b*) meadow (by water), Evesham (Eofa's ham).
stoke, stow, stead = a settlement, enclosed houses.
ton (*tun*, pr. toun, our *town*), enclosed place, usually houses: Norton, Sutton, Aston, Weston = North toun, etc. Middleton, Milton, Melton = place in midst (of moors, etc.).
haw = enclosed place (hedged), (of houses), Hawes.
hampstead, hampton = a home [South] Hampton, [North] Hampton, Berkhamstead, etc.
worth = a single farm, *also* -worthy, -wardine—Tamworth, Leintwardine.
charl, chorl = freeman, Charlbury = bury (fort) of ceorls, Chorlton, freemen's tûn.

2. *Place descriptions English or borrowed Celtic.*

bach, hope, combe, dean, dene, den = valley or dale.
don, dun = hill, down.
hale, haile, hal, hall = an enclosed meadow, Halesowen.
ley, lea, leigh, ly = open pasture land.
field = open cultivable land (*i. e.* not wood, nor enclosed).
shaw, holt = a copse: hurst = clearing in wood.
swin—of pigs: shep, ship—of sheep.
barton = yard for corn (*i. e.* originally without a house).
wich, wych = a salt-spring, Droitwich, Nantwich, etc., or a cleft in hills.
toot, tooting = a look-out.

3. *Names given to places the English found existing.*

stan, stain, ston, stony (became stam-)—
(*a*) of druid circles: *Stanton.*
(*b*) Roman buildings or roads: *Stamford, Stane Street.*
port—ancient roads, or places on them: *Portway, Stockport.*
strat, stret—of Roman roads: *Stratford, Streatham.*

chester, caister, etc.—of the walls surrounding Roman towns or camps left empty for generations, and some still so.
wall—often refers to Roman walls.
burh, bury, borough, burgh—
(1) of hill camps, or other ancient sites : *Brough-under-Stainmore, Cadbury.*
(2) later used of many fortified places : *Bury St. Edmunds, Edinburgh.*
British names : Avon, Derwent, [water] Tame (Thames, Teme). Pen = hill : caer, car = fortress.

4. *Names of fresh homes (perhaps c.* 600–1066).
(*a*) sal, sale = a thegn's hall, Monsal.
chep-, cheap-, chip- = a market, Cheapside, Chepstow, Chipping Norton (Saxon).
hay, hey = hedged place; or a thicket in wood (for game reserve).
ford, lade, lede = a crossing, ford : *Lechlade.*
(*b*) Church-names—
eccles (ecclesia) = a church.
minster = monastery, or, head-church (Saxon).
prest (priest), Prestbury, Preston.
kirk = a church (Anglian or Danish).
steeple, staple, *sometimes* = shaft of a cross, a chapel.

III

THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

The English brought with them to Britain their ancient religion. Like all other German and Scandinavian peoples they believed in gods of strength and cunning closely connected with the forces of Nature: Tiw (or Tyr), Woden, Thor, Frey, Lok and others, whom they worshipped in temples or open-air shrines usually on the top of some hill. But they do not seem to have had a very strong religious feeling towards them. Perhaps when they had left their ancient shrines behind they felt a lessening confidence in the power or goodwill of these gods.

They did not, however, learn anything of the Christian faith from their victims and enemies, the British. Those bishops and clergy who escaped massacre fled with the remnant of their flocks, some oversea to Brittany, where they founded several towns and sees, and the rest to Wales, where during the sixth century they established the sees of St. David's and St. Asaph's. Even if it could have been likely that the victorious heathen would listen to the preaching of the despised Welsh, the latter hated them far too bitterly to make any effort to convert them. It was not until a century and a half from the migration that missionaries reached the English, and then they did not come from either of the nearest Christian lands.

Both Gaul and Ireland were by this time mostly Christian. The former country, conquered by Franks in the north and Visigoths in the south, had been grievously barbarised, yet not intentionally. The conquerors respected Latin civilisation and wished to maintain it for their own use as far as possible. They therefore showed mercy to their subjects and not only tolerated their religion, but readily adopted it themselves. Thus in *France* (Frankia) Christianity had a continuous existence and did much to mitigate the savagery of the barbarians. But the task was too stupendous to leave room for missionary undertakings beyond the country.

Ireland, too, had long since been converted. Her most famous apostle, St. Patrick (430–460), had found a few Christians already in the island, and after his career heathenism was practically vanquished. Other civilising influences had also reached Ireland without touching England. When the barbarian invasions broke up the centres of learning in Gaul, a number of scholars fled to

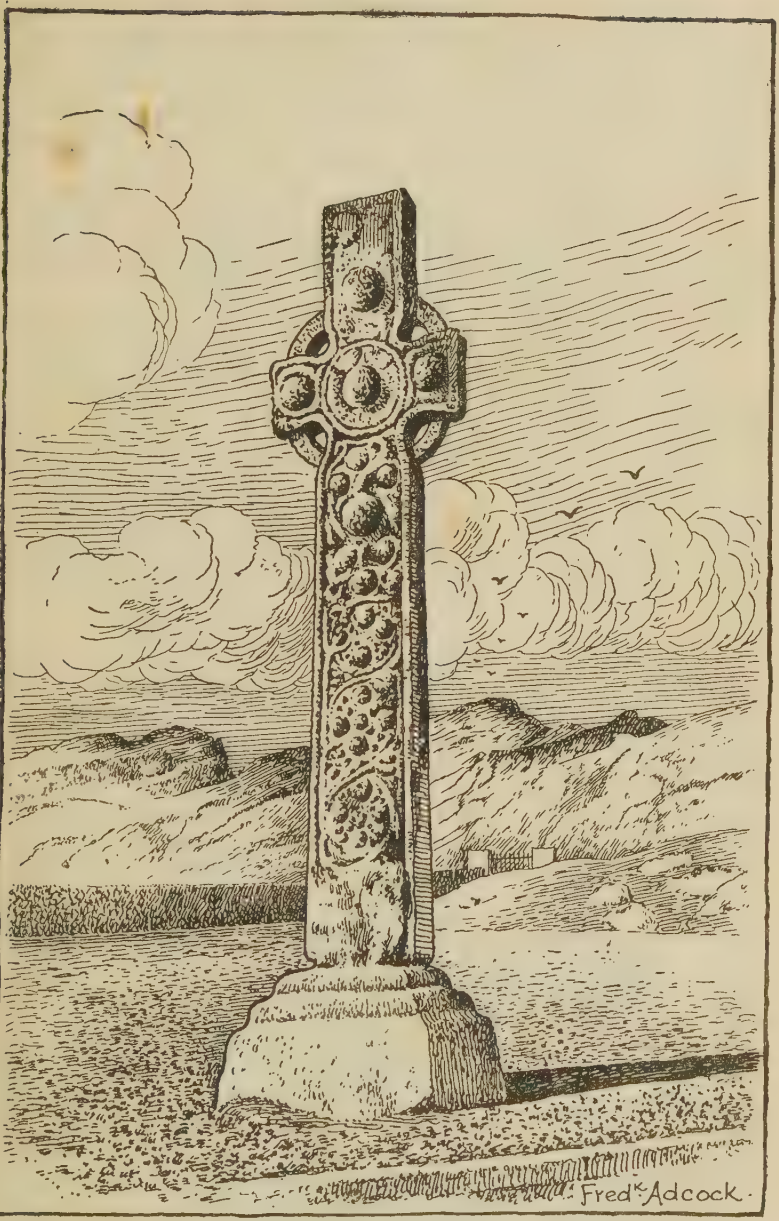
Ireland and brought with them their learning and their books, Greek as well as Latin. During the sixth century, while England was barbarian, schools sprang up in Irish monasteries till Ireland became celebrated as the saintly island whence scholar-missionaries went forth to teach on the continent. They founded several famous monasteries in Italy and southern Germany, but when they visited Britain they, of course, landed on the west coast and devoted themselves either to aiding the British Christians of Cornwall and Wales, or, like St. Ninian, preaching to the heathen of the western coasts of Scotland. And it was here, upon the little isle of Hy or *Iona*, that the great Irish saint Columba founded the chief glory of the Scoto-Irish Church.

In the monastery on Iona 150 monks dwelt in a cluster of simple wooden and thatched buildings, raised by their own hands. No one possessed any property of his own, nor ever was idle. They laboured in fishing and in farm work to supply themselves with necessary food, which they hospitably shared with any travellers or poor folk who asked help of them. The rest of their time was devoted to prayer, to the study of the Bible and religious books and to writing out more copies of books, especially of the Scriptures. This they came in time to do with great skill, adorning the pages with beautiful illuminations.

As all books were then written by hand it was only by constant labour that single copies could be made for churches, schools, and for a few readers; and the whole of the material—parchment or vellum (skin), pens, ink, colours—had first to be obtained and prepared by the monks. It was a lengthy and highly skilled work, and, in those savage ages, could only be accomplished in the tranquillity of the monasteries, where men worked for love. To the monks we owe much of such salvage of the knowledge and literature of the Latin world as was made from the ravages of the barbarians.

The holy lives of Columba and his followers and their courageous preaching quickly won the wild princes and tribes of the Caledonian west to accept baptism. At a later date England also was to owe much to Iona, but not during St. Columba's lifetime. He died in 597, and in that year the first Christian Mission had reached the Saxons of Kent, sent by the bishop of distant Rome, Gregory I, always called Gregory the Great, or St. Gregory.

Gregory was a highly educated, influential and extremely wealthy nobleman of Rome, who remained in that city during the worst times of trouble, through famine, pestilence and fierce attacks by the barbarian Lombards. He was eminent in piety, and devoted his vast wealth to the public good and to founding monasteries, the only places of refuge in those cruel times. He even turned his own palace into a monastery and became a monk there himself. After working for many years in the interests of the city and the Roman Church as the right hand of the bishop (now called by the Greek name of *pope*, or father), he resolved to attempt the more dangerous



ST. MARTIN'S CROSS, IONA.
(From a photograph by J. Valentine and Sons.)

task of converting the redoubtable English barbarians. This duty had been suddenly brought before him by the sight of some beautiful English boys put up for sale as slaves in the Roman market, slave merchants being probably the only intermediaries at that time between Rome and her old British province. Slavery was then so universal a custom that no one yet dreamed of ending it; all the charitable could do was to redeem a few now and then.

With the pope's permission Gregory set out on his journey to England, but the Roman people, who not only loved him, but expected to be supported by his generosity, rose in a riot and forced the pope to send for him back. Shortly after, this pope died and Gregory was chosen to succeed him.

It was not only Rome and Italy for which the Roman bishop had to care. The bishop of the imperial city had long been, naturally, the most influential of all bishops, and after the barbarian invasions the bishop was the one individual in whom still resided the prestige of the "eternal City." The gifts of the pious, also, gave him the control of sufficient wealth for great undertakings. It was, therefore, to the bishop of Rome that the other bishops of western Europe turned when puzzled by difficulties; to him missionaries looked for support; to him oppressed Christians in Spain, Gaul, or North Africa cried for relief, and thus an undefined responsibility for the Church in the west had insensibly come to attach itself to him.

Several years elapsed before Gregory could find a fit person to undertake the English mission who could also be spared from distracted Italy. At last the prior of his own monastery proved willing to venture and with him a party of some forty monks. As they knew not the English tongue they obtained interpreters from the Franks. They reached Thanet in the spring of 597 and met with a kinder reception than they had expected. Ethelbert, the king of Kent, had married a Frankish princess, a Christian, who had brought with her a chaplain and worshipped God in the royal town of Canterbury, in the little church of St. Martin, rebuilt from a Roman ruin.

Ethelbert ordered the missionaries to be hospitably treated, while he sent for his thegns to consult with. In a few days he held a meeting in the open air when Augustine, through the interpreter, "told how the mild-hearted Healer of mankind by His own throes of suffering set free this guilty middle-earth and opened to believing men the door of heaven." Ethelbert, speaking for all, replied that these words and promises were good, yet, as they were new and unproved, he said, "we may not yet forsake the ways which we with all the Angles have so long holden; but . . . as you wish to make known to us the things that you believe to be good and true we will not annoy you." He granted them a dwelling in Canterbury, supplied them with all that they required, and gave them full liberty to preach and baptise.

This was the first movement of progress and enlightenment which England received from France, showing that the close intercourse between the Belgic and British lands had not ceased upon the conquest of the one by the Franks and the other by the English. In ages to come further impulses would reach her by the same route.

SAXON WORK IN DEERHURST CHURCH.
(From a photograph by F. R. Turner, Tewkesbury.)

The devout, ascetic lives and earnest preaching of Augustine and his monks speedily convinced all men of the nobility of their aims. Ethelbert himself was converted and with him many of his thegns and people. The monks began to build or rebuild some churches and a monastery in which to live according to their faith and customs. Augustine was consecrated, in Gaul, bishop of the English Church at Canterbury, and Gregory sent some more missionaries to work under him and gave him a *pall*, or white scarf, as a token of authority over all clergy and bishops of the land. It seems to have been originally a mark of dignity in the Roman Empire. Ever since, Canterbury has been the metropolitan see of England, and until Henry VIII the Roman popes used to bestow a pall on every archbishop in similar fashion. Gregory desired Augustine to establish twelve bishops' sees in the island, but the work of conversion could not proceed so fast, and only Rochester and London (now the capital of the East Saxons) had bishops when Augustine died. A little church, dedicated to St. Paul, had already risen on the site of the present St. Paul's, and a little monastery on a lonely island in the Thames, afterwards named the West Minster, when the Christian kings of Kent and Essex died, and for a short time a pagan reaction reigned. Many of the monks fled, but Archbishop Laurentius remained, faced King Eadbald and soon converted him. When, therefore, Edwin, king of Northumbria, asked for Ethelbald's daughter in marriage her brother stipulated that she should be allowed to worship Christ, and to take with her a chaplain, Paulinus.

Edwin, like Ethelbert, summoned his thegns and wise men to consider this new religion. One of the thegns spoke. "The life of man upon earth," he said, "is as if, while you and your nobles are feasting on a winter's night, with the fire blazing in the midst of your hall, and the rain and storm raging outside, a sparrow should fly into the hall by one door and fly out by another. . . . So for a short space man's life is before our eyes, but of what is before, or what follows it, we know nothing. If then this new teaching can enlighten us as to these things, by all means let us hearken to it." The others agreed, and the chief priest invited Paulinus to tell them about his God. When he had finished, Edwin announced his own acceptance of the faith of Christ, and the priest, Coifi, went forth before all the people and desecrated and then burned down the heathen temple. Edwin speedily erected a small wooden church in his capital city, Eoforwic (York), and there with many of his thegns and his family was baptised at Easter.

Edwin was a strong and a wise king, and under his influence Christianity spread rapidly. The northern limit of his kingdom is marked by the fortress he built against the Picts, Edwin's burgh—Edinburgh. He annexed Elmet, Lindsey, and East Anglia, defeated the Welsh in the heart of Shropshire, and in Mona (Anglesey), and drove their king, Cadwallon, to Ireland for a time. Edwin was thereafter called *Bretwalda*, a title held by several famous

ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH AT BRADFORD-ON-AVON.

GREENSTEAD CHURCH.

kings of the English, which hints at a recognised ideal of union. His realm was governed in so orderly a manner that it became a saying that "a woman with her newborn babe might walk scatheless from sea to sea in Edwin's day." From Northumbria, the English now began to penetrate westward, making their way along the valleys of the Lune and Ribble, and along the Wall to Carlisle. The course of their migration into the lake region and northern Lancashire, is marked by the beautiful carved crosses they erected, as at Bewcastle. In Edwin's time, too, churches rose at Doncaster and Lincoln (St. Paul's), and in York a stone church was begun, enclosing the little wooden oratory where Paulinus had baptised the king. Four times has the cathedral church been destroyed by the heathen or by fire, and each time rebuilt, more nobly than before.

About this time the under-king of East Anglia, Sigebert, having become a Christian during a time of exile among the Franks, desired Archbishop Honorius to send a missionary to his people, so St. Felix, from Burgundy, came and began their conversion: Felixstowe was his home.

But the ambition of Penda, the heathen king of Mercia, violently interrupted the progress of Christianity and civilisation. In alliance with the Welsh Cadwallon he succeeded in destroying Edwin and his army on the moor called the Heathfield, near Doncaster, and the Welsh then spread massacre and ruin through all Northumbria. Paulinus and the royal household fled to Kent and Christianity was almost wiped out, except where a faithful deacon, James, ministered to a band of refugees among the moors by Catterick, where once Paulinus had baptised hundreds in the river Swale. The Northumbrians took Edwin's fall as a verdict on his faith. But the two young heathen princes who tried to rule Deira and Bernicia were at once slain by Cadwallon.

Then the Bernician prince, Oswald, took the kingship. He had fled, during Edwin's reign, to Iona, and had become a Christian. He went out to fight Cadwallon near Hexham, with a tall wooden cross set up as the standard of his troops, and prayed aloud before them "to the living and true Lord, that of His mercy He will defend us from our proud and cruel foe, for He knoweth that the cause for which we fight is just." Cadwallon was defeated and slain: the English called the place *Heavenfield*, and a chapel stands there to this day called St. Oswald's.

Oswald sent to Iona for missionaries, and to the band of devoted men who came he gave Lindisfarne for a monastery home. The most saintly and famous of them is Aidan, unwearied in ceaseless journeys and teaching among the wild Northumbrians. Several churches were built, beginning in Oswald's royal fortress of Bamburgh, but more important still was the school Aidan established at Lindisfarne to train English clergy. Already in Canterbury Archbishop Honorius had founded such a school, and Felix had one at Dunwich. So successful were they that in

the next generation the Church was no longer dependent upon foreigners.

Oswald, like Edwin, had a strong influence over the other kingdoms and used it to encourage the spread of religion, especially in Wessex, where he stood godfather to the king, Cynegils, who had recently been converted by an Italian missionary named Birinus, the first bishop, and there still exists, near Burford, a little church, built on the ruins of some Roman villa, dedicated to St. Oswald.

Oswald's career was suddenly broken by Penda, who first overran East Anglia, then, in alliance with Cadwalader, Cadwallon's son, waged war on Oswald, who was defeated and slain on the Maserfeld, a plain the situation of which is not certain. Cadwalader cut off Oswald's head and hand, and exposed them in derision on a tall post, or *tree*, as the English called it, seemingly at the Welsh town of Oswestry (*Oswald's tree*). But Oswy, Oswald's brother, soon rescued the relics and had them honourably kept at Bamburgh, his chief fortress. They were ever after held sacred, and Oswald for a saint, for his bones were believed to work miracles.

Penda, however, invaded Northumbria, where Aidan's prayers, it was believed, wrought the deliverance of Bamburgh, which the Mercians vainly tried to burn down, but they drove Oswy to his furthest fortress, beside the Firth of Forth. Thence he sent to Penda and the Welsh chiefs who were with him a great treasure, with his son as a hostage, to buy a respite. Penda seized all but came on. "If the heathen will not accept our gifts," said Oswy, "let us offer them to Him who will, even to the Lord our God." And he vowed that, if God would give him victory, he would show his thankfulness by building twelve monasteries and by dedicating his young daughter to the religious life. He sallied out and fought beside the river Winwæd (perhaps Gala Water); Penda and nearly all his chiefs were slain, and his army perished on the field or in the flooded river. This was the end of paganism in England, and the beginning of a time of peaceful prosperity for the north. Aidan had died before the day of deliverance, but he was ere long succeeded at Lindisfarne by the famous Cuthbert, one of the English youths whom he had trained there. Mercia also was rapidly converted by Aidan's disciples; St. Chad is her most famous missionary, and over his hermitage on the lake island of Lichfield soon was founded the Cathedral church of that diocese.

Christianity now embracing the whole country, it became evident that the differences between the rules and ritual of Iona and Rome would have to be harmonised. A principal point was the observance of Easter. The Irish Church had always calculated the date on an ancient system, and as Columba had observed this—knowing, indeed, no other—the Iona missionaries would never hear of changing their rule to match the more correct calculation observed by Rome and all Western Europe. Thus it had happened that in the royal town the king and his thegns were celebrating the Easter

rejoicings while the queen and her priests and friends from Kent were still fasting in Lent. This was not only unseemly, for both fasting and feasting were publicly and earnestly observed, but, in those days of simple thinking and strenuous action, it seemed to mean that either the Scots or the Romans were refusing to obey the directions of the Apostles.

Accordingly King Oswy called together a great council at one of the twelve new monasteries he had just built, Streoneshalch (probably Whitby). Hitherto he had followed the ways of Aidan, but his son, who was sub-king in Deira, had adopted the Roman ways, and even expelled a body of Scottish monks from the new monastery of Ripon and gave it to the able young priest Wilfrid, a Northumbrian noble who had been trained in Gaul and Rome. At the council Wilfrid, with the venerable deacon James and Agilbert, the able Frankish bishop of Wessex, convinced the council that the Roman way was better. Wilfrid concluded by claiming that the authority of Rome was, indeed, that of St. Peter himself, to whom the Lord had entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Oswy asked Colman, the Scottish bishop of Lindisfarne, whether this were true. "It is true, O King." "Did the Lord give such authority also to Columba?" "No." "Then," said Oswy, "I will not decide against the doorkeeper, lest when I come before the gates of heaven he who holds the keys should not open to me." This meant that the north of England would, like the south, accept the customs observed at Rome and would look thither for instruction instead of to Ireland. Colman and his monks withdrew to Iona or to Melrose and were replaced by a bishop and abbots trained in Roman ways.

The missionaries from Iona had upheld the loftiest standard of personal holiness. Their charity and purity, their equal love of poor and rich, ignorant and wise, their asceticism and their unselfishness had won the confidence of the people and had enabled them to plant the Gospel firmly from the Cheviots to the forests of Essex.

The Roman clergy, more cultivated and experienced, could scarcely show such a record of saintliness and zeal, yet in their wonderful organisation they bestowed on English Christianity a much-needed gift. The system of Iona was monastic but nomadic. The hermit-monks lived as much as possible withdrawn from daily life, practising an extreme asceticism, which often impaired their usefulness and even endangered life, but conducting frequent missions among the people. The Roman plan aimed at more permanent and regular teaching. A cathedral church with its bishop and a group of clergy was to be placed in each city or tribal centre, so as to leaven the people's life by maintaining the services and sacraments of the Church permanently among them. Moreover, since Ireland, cut off from the East and from Europe, was not destined to continue an "Isle of Saints," Iona was out of contact with any progressive

society. By accepting the lead of Rome, therefore, the English placed themselves in communication with the springs of mental and moral growth. The wisdom of their choice was, later, acknowledged by the Celtic Church in Scotland, which quietly adopted the Roman calculation and so fell into line with the rest of western Christendom.

PRINCIPAL EVENTS

	Ethelbert, king of Kent, *Bretwalda.*
597.	Augustine's Mission.
	Laws of Ethelbert.
	Redwald, king of East Anglia, *Bretwalda.*
614.	Battle of Chester.
	Penda, king of Mercia.
c. 627.	Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, and other bishops establish schools.
617–633.	Edwin, king of Northumbria, *Bretwalda.*
	Battle of Heathfield.
634.	Battle of Heavenfield.
634–641.	Oswald, king of Northumbria, *Bretwalda.*
	Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne. Birinus, bishop of Wessex.
642.	Battle of the Maserfield.
642.	Oswy, king of Northumbria, *Bretwalda.*
	Council of [Whitby] Streoneshalch.
655.	Battle of Winwaedfield, Penda slain.

IV

ORGANISATION

The Council of Whitby had scarcely concluded when the first visitation of the dreadful Yellow Plague fell upon England. Cedd, bishop of Essex, died on his way homewards, and half the East Saxons fell back to paganism. The new bishop of Lindisfarne perished also, and King Oswy made Wilfrid, abbot of Ripon, bishop, who transferred his see to York. As the archbishop of Canterbury also died, Wilfrid went to Gaul for consecration, but he stayed there so long that Oswy, indignant, supposed he did not mean to return, and made Cedd's saintly brother Chad bishop of York in his place. He also urged the young king of Kent, whose father had died of the plague on the same day as the archbishop, to provide for the see of Canterbury, and helped him and his clergy to select a pious and learned English priest, whom they sent to Rome, for consecration, with their letters to the pope. No sooner had Wighard reached Rome than he, too, and nearly all his company died of the sickness, and Pope Vitalian, seeing that England had now been four years without a metropolitan, thought it urgent to send a fit man at once. He chose an eminent Greek monk then at Rome, Theodore of Tarsus, who was willing, for Christ's sake, to exile himself to the cold and barbarous island for the rest of his life. He set out in 668, with his friend the wise abbot Hadrian, a Latin from North Africa, and they were guided by an English monk, Benedict Biscop, who had come to Rome to study and had learned the Roman discipline of monastic life, called after its founder, the Rule of St. Benedict (of Nursia). The mission of these three friends was of the greatest moment for England.

Theodore found only three bishops still alive in England: Wilfrid, who had now returned, was kept out of his see of York by the king of Northumbria's enmity; Chad was at York in Wilfrid's place; the bishop of Winchester, a man of no high character, had been turned out of his see by the king of Wessex and had then actually purchased the see of London from the king of Mercia, who was overlord of Essex and of London. It seemed that religion was dependent on the prejudices or politics of kings.

Theodore's dignified authority and his sympathy in a few years induced Oswy to restore Wilfrid, Chad, with pure humility, retiring

at once to make way for him. Then Chad was placed at Lichfield. To East Anglia Theodore assigned two bishops, one for the North-folk at Elmham, one for the South-folk at Dunwich. The huge see of Mercia he divided into five: Lichfield for Mercia proper; Leicester (afterwards Dorchester) for the tribe of Middle Angles; Worcester for the Hwiccas; Stow (or Lincoln) for Lindsey, and, later, Hereford for the Hecanas on the Welsh borderland. Soon Wessex also had two sees, at Winchester and at Sherborne. A bishop's see was not to be another name for a political kingdom; each tribe was to have its bishop that he might be able to visit the whole of his flock and provide churches and clergy for the people that he knew. Nor did the kings wish to hinder Theodore's work. He had conferred a great boon on the land by bringing to an end, by his wise mediation, a war which had just begun between Ethelred of Mercia and the new king of Northumbria, Ecgfrid, Oswy's son.

The only hindrance came from one who might have been expected to help. Wilfrid, now bishop of York, utterly refused to permit his enormous diocese to be divided. He had an imperious temper, and his noble birth, his youthful successes and his familiarity with the splendour of continental prelates led him to assume the air of a man above any English authority. Wilfrid had discovered that the original scheme of Gregory the Great for the Church in Britain had intended two archbishops, at London and York, and he chose to think that this should override all the arrangements actually made and sanctioned. He therefore denied the archbishop's authority, flouted the king, and appealed to the pope to do him justice, as if he were being persecuted in England. King Ecgfrid became so wroth that he at one time imprisoned him.

The pope showed no alacrity to interfere unduly in England, and though, when Wilfrid reached Rome, he received him very kindly, he seems to have considered that the questions Wilfrid brought could only be settled by the English authorities themselves. Three times did Theodore, or the pope, or the abbess of Whitby, contrive to reconcile Wilfrid with three successive Northumbrian kings, but on each occasion his arrogance led to a fresh expulsion. His memory, however, lives also as the evangelist of the peasants of Sussex; for when, during a period of exile, he was cast on their shores by a storm, and found them to be neglected pagans, he preached the Faith to them zealously and established a bishop in Selsey.

Wilfrid also gave a strong impulse to the needful work of church-building. His two monasteries of Ripon and Hexham were so magnificently built, partly from Roman materials, that the like was hardly to be seen on this side of the Alps. Wilfrid seems to have supposed that Roman ruins must be remains of churches, and claimed that they should all be the property of the Church, and the kings usually treated them as quarries for sacred buildings. This seems

to show that there was still a great deal remaining along the Wall and in the cities and fortresses of ancient Britain, at least in the north. Perhaps this idea of Wilfrid's is the reason why several of the oldest Saxon churches in the north were built on Roman sites, as had been the case at Canterbury and Bath. Wilfrid also repaired the minster of York. He filled the windows with glass—a great rarity then—and covered the roof with sheets of lead, because thatched roofs so often caught fire. There was plenty of lead to be had, for the Roman mines in Derbyshire and elsewhere were not yet forgotten, but the skilled workmen and the master masons must have been brought from abroad. He also built Southwell Minster and many other churches. His magnificent ways are well seen in the account of the dedication feast of the church of Ripon. The altar was covered with gold and purple and sacred vessels, and the king and all the great men of the kingdom and the people of the neighbourhood were feasted for three days and nights. Wilfrid derived the means for such splendour and for his famous buildings from the constant gifts of jewels, money, and above all, landed estates, which were made to him by the admiring nobility. He was far wealthier than the king. He seems to us more like a secular prince than a churchman, but in his own time his devotion to monks and to the Roman Church procured him the title of *Saint*, which indeed the early English bestowed rather lavishly upon ascetics and royal monks or nuns.

But in spite of the pope's support of him, he was not allowed by Theodore to become quite independent, and in the end the archbishop's scheme of bishoprics was carried out, though after his own death, and the north divided between York, Lindisfarne, Hexham and Whithern.

Founding bishoprics was only one part of Theodore's system. He drew up for the Church a great code of rules, that all the bishops might deal alike with the sinful, since the moral control of life depended wholly upon the clergy. They could not, of course, use any kind of police or (as yet) law courts, but they could endeavour to raise the standard, which was at that time incredibly low, by refusing to admit notorious sinners to the church and the sacraments, by rejecting their gifts and by persuading other Christians to keep apart from them, so long as they were unrepentant. Repentance had to be proved by making good (if possible) the harm inflicted on others and by submitting to the *penances*, or voluntary punishments, ordered by the Church. Thus the clergy could at least testify to the heinousness of sin, and in course of time they won much success in awakening consciences.

Theodore drew his Rules from those of both the Latin and the Greek Churches, so that England was almost equally indebted to Gregory the Great and to St. Basil. Thus, he took the Greek laws about marriage, which forbade the marriage of near relatives to the degree of first cousins; the Roman rules forbade the marriage

of the most distant relatives, while English heathen custom even permitted a man to marry his stepmother. On the other hand, Theodore's rule for observing rest on Sunday was stricter than that of Rome. The weekly rest and divine worship were, of course, new to the English, and to the serfs and slaves Sunday was a wonderful boon.

That the entire Church might adopt these *Canons* Theodore called together the first English *Synod*—or meeting of the whole clergy—at a place called Herutford (probably Hertford), and there the assembled Church agreed to Theodore's laws, and declared its united adherence to a number of the established Canons of the Western Church. Bishops were to keep to their own dioceses and not interfere in others. Clergy should not leave their diocese, nor monks their monastery, without the permission of their bishop or abbot. Marriage must be regarded as sacred, and men must not discard their wives at their pleasure.

It was also agreed that Synods should be regularly held at a certain place near London, named Clovesho.

These great meetings of the national clergy, unfettered by the limits of tribes or the authority of kings, taught the English a two-fold, visible lesson : (1) that the Church was other, and wider, than the State; (2) that it was possible to unite in one body, in spite of local distinctions.

In the meantime Theodore's friends, Benedict Biscop and Hadrian, were conducting their share of the great work. They re-founded the school of clergy at Canterbury. Hadrian, the older man, was abbot, and Biscop travelled to Italy to fetch books. Five times, in all, he made this tremendous journey, as it was then, and supplied not only Canterbury but two monasteries and schools on the Tyne, which he established at the wish and cost of King Ecgfrid, at Monk-Wearmouth and Jarrow. They were conducted differently from the older convents, for the Rule of St. Benedict was introduced, and according to this the monks lived together, under rules, instead of each living and praying apart, as in the Scottish system. Biscop was much helped by the great influence of Cuthbert, Aidan's disciple, who had been prior at Melrose and was now at Lindisfarne.

The schools in these monasteries were usually for boys who were being brought up to become monks. People would often dedicate children to God's service, and so they were early trained to read and sing the services and kept in strict discipline. But from the time of the introduction of the Benedictine rule, the monasteries ceased to be missionary centres : the monks' duty was henceforth to maintain continual divine worship in their church, for the glory of God and the salvation of their souls, and to pray for those who had founded or helped them. The evangelisation of the people proceeded, now, from the episcopal centres and from the numerous churches founded with provision for a group of clergy, who were

to preach and to teach. Each of these *minsters*, or central churches, seems to have had its school. The clergy lived together, unless they were married and had their own homes, and divided the duties between them. Such minsters arose at Winchester, Worcester, London, Malmesbury, Lincoln, York, Hexham, Ripon, Southwell, and scores of less important places,[1] and in their schools boys and young men, many but not all of whom became clergy themselves, learned all the science of the day, Latin and theology, and sometimes Greek. Worcester minster school, for instance, is known to have fetched books from Spain and Italy in the eighth century. The schools of Yorkshire, of which we happen to know most, lit such a torch of learning and religion in Northumbria as not only raised the standard in England itself, but was passed on to darker places on the Continent.

The mass of the English people, however, were apt to take the new religion as a new sort of magic, and to transfer to it their old superstitions. Just as they celebrated their Yule feast at Christmas, their spring feast of the Goddess Eostra at Easter, their midsummer magic on St. John's Eve, and their harvest festival on St. Michael's Day, so they attributed the magic of olden "holy wells" to the newly heard-of saints, and expected monks, whom they specially revered, or the relics of saints, to work miracles. The only sure way of counteracting these superstitions was by the spread of teaching, and therefore it was towards training the young, especially the sons of influential men, and those who were likely to become clergy, that the bishops directed much of their attention. Study was far more difficult then than now, but it was eagerly pursued. In order to acquire any learning a knowledge of the Latin language had first to be obtained, for all books were written in Latin, excepting those written in Greek. An acquaintance with Latin opened to the student a world of ideas not yet discovered by the barbarians. Royal and noble scholars frequented the lessons of the monks. Princesses eagerly took the veil, and often excelled in scholarship and in its first duty, that of copying manuscripts. Etheldreda of Ely, Frideswide of Oxford, and Hilda of Whitby are famous. The poet Caedmon was one of St. Hilda's pupils, five of whom became bishops. Hadrian's most brilliant pupil was Aldhelm, bishop of Sherborne, and founder of Malmesbury Abbey. Aldhelm was a poet, and used to get the ignorant Saxon peasants to listen to the Gospel by standing on Malmesbury bridge, dressed like a minstrel, and singing songs to them of their old legends and then going on with the Bible stories. The most famous pupil of Benedict Biscop in the north was the Venerable Bede, who spent a long life in handing on great learning. "I have ever found my pleasure in learning, teaching and writing," he said. He not only wrote out many volumes of the Scriptures and other books, but compiled Commentaries for the clergy to study, and Grammars and works of

[1] *e.g.*, Minster in Thanet; Ax-, Bed-, Leo-, Stur-, War- minster, etc.

Natural History for the students. He is especially famous for his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, the earliest true history written among any of the medieval nations. It was completed in 731, and from then till now it has been the basis of all the histories compiled about early England.

Books were highly valued then. King Aldfrid of Northumbria, himself a good scholar, exchanged eight hides of land for a fine copy of a work on Geography, brought to England by Benedict Biscop, who gave the land to his monastery.

A good foundation for Biscop's work (so ably continued by Bede) had been laid by the Scottish monks of Lindisfarne, where, as at Jarrow and Wearmouth, books were busily copied and hundreds of scholars absorbed the learning, Scriptural and secular, provided by Biscop's teachers and his library. Jarrow alone contained 600 monks, though by no means all of them would be scholars.

The customs of Lindisfarne survived both in the beautiful, rounded writing which characterised the English school of scribes, and in another respect, which we can see in almost any old parish church. Though masons and glaziers might come from abroad, and though the magnificent cathedral and monastery churches were usually designed on the continental plan, with a curved eastern end, or *apse*, yet in the smaller churches, which began to grow up in the villages, the pattern of the Scots was invariably copied. They had built in timber, and the east end of their churches was always square, and this square choir became the distinctive feature of the ordinary English church.

In the year of Bede's death (735) one of his disciples, Egbert, became bishop, or rather archbishop of York—for King Aldfrid procured this increase of dignity for the see from Rome, and expected it to become the metropolitan see of Scotland—and Egbert re-established at York the school of Paulinus, which in connection with the minster, or cathedral church, soon became famous. There, in the second generation after Egbert, lived and studied the great scholar Alcuin, whose fame was so great that the Frankish king, Charles the Great (Charlemagne), who restored the Western Roman Empire, sent for him to restore the schools and the learning of Gaul. So England, then indeed an Isle of Saints (though she never claimed that title), returned to France something of the benefits she had in an earlier time derived thence.

Already devoted English missionaries had gone forth to preach in the heathen land of Frisia, because thence had come the early Angles and Saxons. Willibrod of Ripon, especially, made many converts there and in Heligoland, and founded the bishop's see of Utrecht. But the most famous was Winfrith of Crediton, re-named Boniface, "the Apostle of Germany." He was a scholar from Exeter, a city which, half Welsh and half English, had been Christian for a long time, possibly always. St. Boniface was a disciple of Aldhelm and a friend of Bede, whom he called "the candle of the Lord." In

Germany he founded the see of Mainz, the first bishopric there. He was martyred in Frisia in 755.

It is almost impossible to estimate duly the changes wrought in the habits and thoughts of the English by the teaching of Christianity. (1) The Church taught the sacredness of marriage and family ties; it taught that before God all ranks were equal. Noble freemen and serfs met together in equality in the church and in the school. If a freeman married a slave she became his equal and the children were free. This was the origin of the free marriage customs of England, where no *caste* has ever been observed.

(2) The possibility of settling a feud by agreement, as Theodore had done for Northumbria and Mercia, instead of by fighting, meant almost a revolution in ideas, and the English chiefs were quick to practise the duty of mercy taught them for the first time by the missionaries. The colonists who pushed into the deserted pastures of Herefordshire had their missionary bishop among them. And when the West Saxons conquered Somerset there were no massacres, but amnesty for the Welsh Christians and protection for their ancient church of Glastonbury, called by the Welsh Ynys-vitrin, where they treasured the tomb of King Arthur and the relics, as they believed, of St. Joseph of Arimathea. The "Laws of Ine" (c. 688), recognise the conquered Briton as a man with rights, not quite so good as his overlord, the Saxon, but with a *wer* for his life and protection for his family and property.

(3) That the Saxon kings should have drawn up laws at all was an achievement due to the Church, and the new lore she brought. One of the first strange things revealed by Augustine's missionaries to the men of Kent was the art of writing, and, in time, the art of reading, but writing had to come first. The heathen English could only cut a few stiff signs—*runes*—upon stone; of the alphabet of the civilised world they were ignorant. As soon as the English kings accepted Christianity they wished to build churches and monastic houses. There had never been occasion before for permanently giving away portions of land, or rather (to be exact), for giving away the rights which the king had over the families who lived upon it. But as the Church would always keep it, it was desirable to have some kind of public testimony to prove the gift permanent, lest succeeding kings might try to take it back. The monks naturally drew up a writing on parchment, such as was usual abroad, and on this the king and his great men set their marks, or, in later days, their seals and signatures. These bits of written parchment, now called *Charters*, they called *Books*, and the gifts of land so witnessed were called *book-lands* (*bócland*).

(4) Once begun, this plan wrought a remarkable change in the mode of treating land. Land was soon *booked* by the kings to secular persons as well, *e. g.* to thegns who had deserved reward, and they got it as a permanent possession and could give it away, or

bequeath it, to some other individual. This in time made much land become personal property, instead of family property, held by tribe custom (or folk-right), and the king (representing the nation) lost most of the national rights over it.

In those early days, however, the kings gladly gave up their rights (to the food-tax and other things) when they gave land for churches or monasteries, being anxious that the clergy should have those rents to subsist on. The gifts were often very considerable. Thus, about the time of Theodore's death, the rent or tax from ten hides of cultivated land (*i.e.* the land of ten families, perhaps nearly 1000 acres, which Oswy gave to each of his twelve monasteries) is specified as amounting to—

10 pints of honey.	12 barrels of Welsh ale.
300 loaves.	30 barrels of clear ale.
2 beeves.	10 wethers.
10 geese.	20 hens.
10 cheeses.	1 tun of butter.

5 trout, 100 eels, and a small quantity of hay.

As the clergy of the minsters also would require a regular supply of food, the landowners who wished to benefit religion began to assign, as they learned was the custom abroad, a definite yearly gift to be paid out of their own food-incomes to the minster or cathedral. The proportion to be given was one-tenth of the food-rent due to the thegn, or lord, from the estate. It was therefore called *tithe,* and it was carried to the church barns when it was harvested. The whole people recognised this custom, which began to prevail in the time of Theodore and his successors. Theodore ordained that the corn and other things thus given to the Church should be fairly divided into three parts, one sold for the upkeep of the fabric of the churches, one for the sustenance of bishop and clergy, and the other for relief of the poor.

It is a curious fact that, though the land cannot have been at all densely inhabited, we hear, from the earliest times, of crowds of indigent persons. Possibly they had lost their land by gambling or misfortunes, or else they were too lazy to till it, or they may have been descendants of Britons, slaves or foreigners. At all events, there were many of them. A favourite story of King Oswald tells how, as he sat down to his meal, Bishop Aidan being beside him, the steward reported that a crowd of starving poor were thronging round the doors, hoping to snatch some of the broken meats which were always given away. Oswald ordered the food before him to be taken out and distributed among them, and, as this was insufficient to feed so many, the silver dish itself to be broken to bits and the silver given to the poor, that they might buy provisions.

Every monastery habitually gave away large quantities of food, from the early days of Christianity to the end of the Middle Ages. Men interpreted the Biblical exhortations to alsmgiving literally,

and thus the already crying difference between rich and poor was to some degree mitigated. Starvation, unless in some exceptionally hard winter, was probably not very common; but misery and disease existed and it became very easy to live as a beggar.

In the same literal manner the medieval Christians applied to their own circumstances all that could be found in the Bible about evil spirits, as well as all that imaginative commentators had written about them. A vast growth of legend, often borrowed really from heathen religions, was accepted as completely as Scripture, until even good men believed that a tempest, a fog, a fever, or any misfortune, was the work of actual devils about them, and often they thought they saw or heard them. Against the evil spirits men sought protection in the prayers of holy men or women, and, as the saint could not be always with them, they liked to have some relic from the body of a saint, as a charm. Thus the ancient ideas of heathen magic crept into Christianity, and in the early Middle Ages became so strong that shrines and churches were built in which to keep such relics as a bone, or a scrap of clothing, and these were actually worshipped and gifts offered to them, or to the clergy or the monks who possessed them. At length no important church or convent was thought sacred without relics, and to get possession of them people often would lie, steal or fight.

In the same way places connected with saints were considered holy, as if prayers made there were more likely to reach heaven than from elsewhere. This was the origin of pilgrimages, a custom thoroughly established in the continental Church before Augustine came to England, and embraced by the English zealously. More than one of the early kings laid down his crown and power, like Ine, to journey as a penitent to Rome, the sacred city of the Western Church. And as early as the eighth century there was a hostel, or school, near St. Peter's where English pilgrims might dwell. Both Ine and Offa endowed it, and it is said that Offa's yearly gift to the Roman Church, called "Peter's Pence," was originally sent to support this school.

During the seventh century it seemed possible that the kings of Northumbria might acquire a permanent supremacy which would unite the several little kingdoms in one, but this possibility ceased at the battle of Nectansmere (685), beyond the Forth, when King Ecgfrid and all his army were destroyed by the Picts, whom he had set out to conquer. Thenceforth the rivalry of the two royal houses of Deira and Bernicia, and other feuds, reduced Northumbria to political impotence.

In the latter part of the eighth century Offa, king of Mercia (757–796), was the strongest English monarch, well-known in Rome and Frankia. The lesser kings recognised his supremacy and the Welsh were compelled to accept a fixed boundary, far within the Severn, marked by the long earthwork still known as Offa's Dyke. His kingdom reached from the Dee valley to London, though his

royal towns lay in the Trent valley—Tamworth, Repton, Torksey and Lichfield, which was for a few years an archbishopric, and it may have been at this time that the large parishes of Derbyshire and South Lancashire were planned, each with its mother-church (such as Bakewell or Ashborne), served by a group of canons, and small chapels in outlying places. *Chapels* were consecrated churches, but without graveyards or parochial responsibilities; they were served by a canon from the mother-church. The Council of Chelsea, in Offa's reign, required the clergy, or chapter, who belonged to each bishop, to live *canonically*, according to the Rule of Metz (c. 750).

Another result of Offa's continental connections was the introduction of water-mills in the south of England. They meant a great saving in hard labour and, as people were ready to pay for this quick grinding, they were profitable. Only thegns, however, could build the weirs for the mill-water, as ordinary folk would not be allowed to block a stream for their own use: a mill, therefore, soon became the privilege of a lord.

Under Offa's supremacy the ablest prince of Wessex, Egbert, fled to the court of Charles the Great, and Offa's son-in-law was king in Wessex, but when Offa and Brihtric were both dead Egbert returned and was at once accepted as king by the men of Wessex and Kent (802). Sussex and Essex readily acknowledged his supremacy, and after twenty years of prosperous rule he fought the Mercians at Ellandun (827) and was victorious, when Mercia and Northumbria also recognised him as overlord. Then all the English tribes and kingdoms were united under his sceptre, though in a very superficial manner, for many under-kings remained and each region kept its own laws. The unity of the Church, however, helped to combine the different tribes, and early in Egbert's reign the Council of Clovesho adopted rules for all dioceses alike.

In Egbert's reign a system of administration becomes evident which was of great importance in the gradual unification of the country—the *Shire* system. Each district colonised by the West Saxons had preserved a certain unity of its own: these were (1) Berkshire and Hamptonshire; (2) the Dor-sætas, Wiln-sætas, Sumor-sætas, and Defn-sætas; (3) the sub-kingdoms of Kent (with Surrey), Sussex, and Essex; (4) and rather later, the Hwiccians (or settlers in Worcestershire), and the Magsætas (in Herefordshire). Each had a chief appointed by the king, called an Ealdorman, who supervised the *moots* (or meetings of the free men), and led the military forces. The rule was for either all the grown men, or else one man for each household, to be called together by the ealdorman whenever a Welsh raid, or an attack from Mercia, or a band of robbers at large, made fighting likely. Each man provided his own weapons and came to the fight carrying provisions for the time specified. This national force was called the *fyrd* of the shire. The ealdorman was also a protector for strangers and a referee in

difficulties, the *reeves*, or headmen of the hundreds and the royal estates were his helpers, and all the "men of the shire" had to carry out his orders, while he himself was responsible to the king. At the moot, or meeting of the folk (*folk-moot, shire-court*), the ealdorman and the bishop presided, sitting side by side, while the *moot* settled points of justice and probably of taxation. Every ealdorman maintained, like the king, a band of *gesiths*, young companions of good birth, to whom he gave weapons and steeds and who were trained as soldiers and so could ride promptly wherever they were needed.

When the kings of Wessex after Alfred became direct rulers of the rest of England, the provinces of Mercia and East Anglia also became shires, and so a system of keeping order developed, based partly on self-government (especially as to justice) and partly on the organised rule of the king (especially in military matters), and the one assembly, the shire-moot, transacted all the business. The local officials were those reeves who were in charge of places or districts belonging to the king, who were termed *king's reeves* and who had to maintain order and assist the ealdorman.

V

THE COMING OF THE DANES: ALFRED

From the laws of Ethelbert, Ine and other kings, from their charters, from the scanty remains of old songs and tales, and from the letters of such men as Bede, Boniface, Alcuin and Aldhelm, it is clear that the England of Offa's or Egbert's time was, in spite of its beggars and robbers, a prosperous country. There was still ample room for a larger population than existed. Food and game, timber and fuel, were plentiful. There was wealth enough to maintain a great number of minsters, with their clergy and schools, and many monasteries—which were centres of agricultural as well as intellectual industry—and to encourage many of the arts of peace. The beautiful work of English jewellers and of the painters who illustrated manuscripts became famous. When Charles the Great (*Carolus Magnus*, *Charlemagne*), the first medieval emperor, strove to re-create civilisation and learning in his dominions it was to England that he sent for masters and skilled artistic workmen. From the time, certainly, of Offa, intercourse with the Frankish dominions and with Italy was frequent, and a regular commerce was conducted between London and the ports of northern France and of Frisia. Frisia meant the region from the Rhine mouth to that of the Weser, where the sea had not yet swallowed up the lowlands and formed the Zuyder Zee, and Frisian merchants from the great port of Durstede, in the district later known as Holland and Zeeland, were the principal agents between England and the Continent. In the north so rich and safe were the people that before the death of Bede (735) thegns were giving up the practice of military exercises and endowing with their estates a kind of mock monasteries, where they lived in sloth. Bede declared that they were not serving God by this and were endangering their country.

This peaceful development was suddenly arrested, in England as all over Europe, by a fresh and terrible series of barbarian invasions. The *Vikings*, pirates from Scandinavia and Denmark, brought to ruin the early and Christian culture of England, Ireland and France, and, though later their descendants introduced much that was excellent in law and organisation, and much that was very useful in city and commercial life, the two centuries of their

WESTERN
EUROPE
8th and 9th Centuries.
Showing main routes
Britain to Rome
DANES
SAXONY
SLAVONIC
TRIBES
BAVARIA
AVARS AND
HUNS
AUSTRASIA
NEUSTRIA
BRITANNY
AQUITAINE
BURGUNDY
LOMBARDY
MOORS
ROME

destructive invasions (ninth and tenth) compelled the western nations to adopt a military system which everywhere, in the end, told against freedom and against intellectual and moral development.

The Norsemen and the Danes had always been fearless sailors and admirable shipwrights. They had followed the lead of the Frisians in trading for slaves and goods in Frankish, English and Irish harbours, but were even readier than most merchants of those times to turn pirate now and then and rob the coasts and islands. In the latter part of the eighth century they began to neglect trade and resort wholly to pillage, and already before the accession of Egbert a party of Norsemen had appeared on the Dorset coast in 787, and another had attacked Lindisfarne (793), the Holy Isle, and burned down the monastery which the fiercest kings and nobles had never dreamed of insulting. Next year they attacked Jarrow and destroyed it, but as they were going off with their booty the thegns of the neighbourhood pursued them and killed them all. Then the English coasts had a respite of forty years (795–835) while the pirates turned upon Ireland and harried it from end to end. They called themselves Vikings, meaning sea-robbers, and were proud of the name, nor was there much difference between Danes and Norsemen. The English called them all Danes.

The Vikings were all picked warriors organised in bands which sailed and fought under the command of some captain to whom all were devotedly loyal. Ragnar Lodbrok, Hasting, Halfdene, Rollo, Rurik, Harald Hardrada, were some of the most famous, and their cruelties caused a new petition to be added to the Litanies : " From the fury of the Northmen, Lord, deliver us."

Their hatred of Christianity was, no doubt, partly the effect of Charles the Great's cruelty to the heathen Saxons, on whom he endeavoured to force his own rule and religion by massacre and war. The remnant of the unsubdued Saxons fled to Denmark and strengthened the resistance of the heathen Danes to Charles. It was only natural that the Vikings should take their revenge on Christian monks and clergy, whose peaceful teaching they despised as sapping the strength of warriors.

They travelled in their " keels " or long ships, each fitted with a mast and a square sail, but relying mostly upon oars. The boats were perfectly designed and built, fitted with benches for from thirty to sixty oars and distinguished by their high, carven prows. The Vikings themselves rowed, hanging their shields on the gunwale meanwhile, and would spring ashore fully armed in chain-mail shirt and metal cap, a compact army. They knew all the harbours, and used to place their fleet in some safe haven under a strong guard, seize the horses of the nearest villages, pillage and burn the churches and houses, and scour the country for plunder, especially for gold, which seemed to stir an insatiable greed in them. The booty was carried back to the fleet, and when enough was secured the Vikings departed home. As the first " professional " army since the time

of the Romans they had an immense advantage over the slow, clumsy levies which, in England or in Frankia, turned out to face them from the farms and villages, unaccustomed to go far from home, unable to manœuvre, worse armed, and devoid of the ferocity which animated the Vikings.

The Vikings were unhampered by pity or gratitude; they repaid mercy or trust with treachery, no oath was binding, no treaty was kept for longer than was convenient. The English never became accustomed either to their perfidy or their rapidity of movement, but they quickly copied their steadiness of fighting and learned from them the advantages of fortification. The Vikings could in a few days construct earthworks which the English fyrds might beleaguer for months without reducing. When Alfred and Edward fortified their *burhs* the Danes, in their turn, were checked.

Three periods of their activity are generally distinguished: first, an era of ravaging, when the fleets put out yearly from the Scandinavian or Danish harbour and returned home for the winter, making a voyage "in Viking" (or -wicking) as they termed it, which was a regular and recognised profession among them (in England, 787 to *c.* 876).

Secondly, a period of gradual settlement upon the country already terrorised (in England, *c.* 876 to *c.* 910; and 980–1016).

Thirdly, came a time of political organisation when states were formed or controlled by the new colonists (1016–1042).

It was little wonder that England and Ireland should be unable to withstand these masters of naval and military science, for stronger peoples proved at least as helpless. The organised attacks directed upon England between 834 and 896 were closely connected with similar attacks on the Frankish kingdom and empire; a successful resistance in the one land diverted the foe to the other. The Vikings alone had fleets; to them the sea was an open road, while to others it was but a terror and a barrier. Already they had ruined the great Frisian port by the Rhine mouth, Durstede, whose very site is now uncertain. The coasts were continually raided by armies which pushed up the rivers, till in 845 Ragnar besieged Paris, and another chief pillaged and burned Hamburg. By 860 the Vikings were in the Mediterranean, disputing with Saracen marauders the spoils of Provence and Italy. In the middle of the century the Saracens nearly seized Rome, and the Vikings burned Pisa. The whole of civilised Europe was menaced, for Rurik led his followers across the Baltic and founded the germ of a kingdom in the plains of Russia, and in 865 an army from thence was besieging Constantinople. The ninth and tenth centuries may well be termed the Dark Ages.

For England the ninth century was the worst. The Norsemen, who had already colonised the Shetlands, Orkneys and Hebrides, early exhausted the spoils of Ireland, and about 834 began to form bases on that coast for further adventure. They seized on the

fishing village of Dublin, which in their hands soon became a fortified town and a famous harbour, and on other good havens—Wexford, Waterford (*-fiord*)—and from these places of refuge they could fall upon the opposite English coast; and they made the Isle of Man another colony and base.

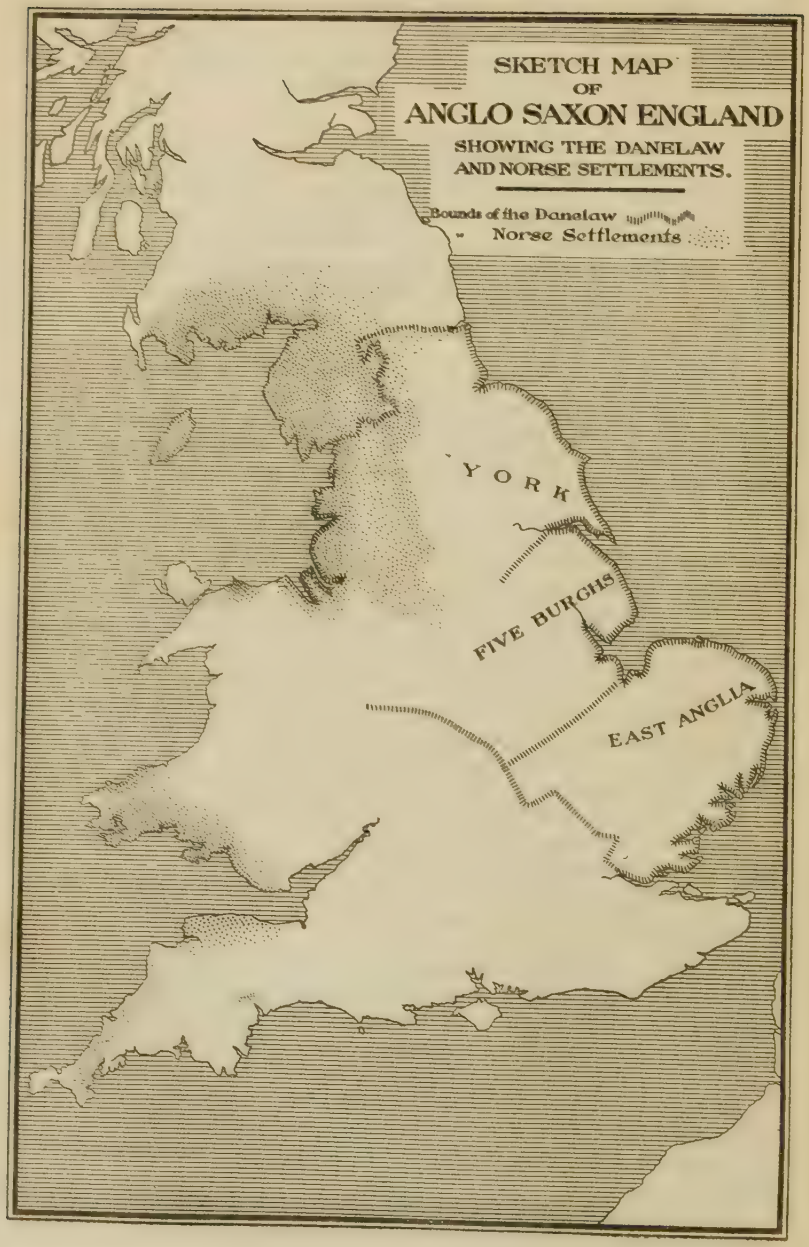
It would seem that most of the western coast of Britain was too barren or too depopulated to afford much plunder, and the Norse therefore began to settle down beside the vacant shores of the mainland, from *Swansea* (Sweyn's isle), Mil*ford* (*-fiord*), and Fish*guard*, past *Ormshead* as far as Wigton, including the whole Lake district and the Isle of Man. They became energetic fishermen and farmers, and lived in peace with the scanty Welsh or Anglian population of the villages of the Cumbrian and Lancashire dales and "fields."

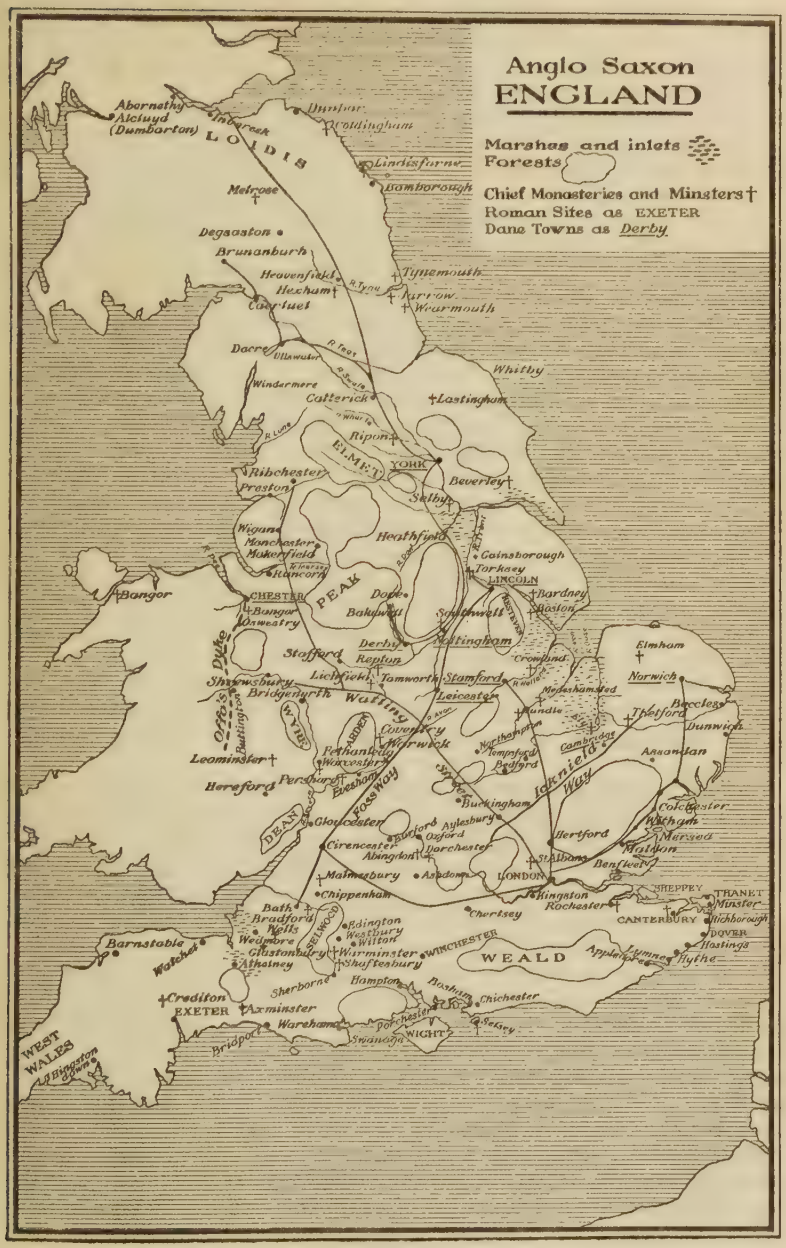
But while the Norwegians were thus settling down the Danes were furiously ravaging the east coast of England, and the Dublin Vikings the south-west. One of the latest deeds of Egbert was to face an army of them, allied with the West Welsh, in Cornwall, and defeat them at Hengistsdown (Hingston, 836). A defeat, however, was never decisive. The destruction of one band only warned the rest to attack some more defenceless place, and during the reign of Egbert's son Ethelwulf, the Danes arrived in ever-increasing numbers.

In 851 a fleet of 350 ships ran into the Thames estuary. Canterbury was burned, the king of Mercia defeated outside London, and London plundered. Between 851 and 861 the Vikings ravaged the coasts of Kent and Devon, fortified themselves in Thanet and Sheppey, raided far inland and burned Winchester, the West Saxon capital, but they met a fierce resistance from King Ethelwulf and the fyrds of Devon, Hants and Berks, Kent and Surrey, and therefore turned their offensive for a few years against France, then against East Anglia (866) and finally against Northumbria. In 867 they took York, which they made their base, while they ravaged Deira with fire and sword and destroyed every church and monastery. The archbishop fled into Wharfdale, and for seven years kept Christianity alive, going to and fro among the fugitives in the dales.

The Danes placed a nominee of their own as sub-king in Bernicia, and, now holding Deira completely, turned on Mercia. Its king, Burhred, and Ethelwulf of Wessex had agreed to help each other, and the Danes could not get much west of Nottingham, but they ravaged Lindsey, and the monasteries of the adjacent fenlands went up in flames. The East Anglian king, Edmund, who was still holding out, was defeated, taken and martyred (870), and not a church or a priest was left between the Humber and the forests of Essex.

To hold the country down, the Danes fortified several towns at commanding positions in which permanent garrisons remained:


SKETCH MAP
OF
ANGLO SAXON ENGLAND
SHOWING THE DANELAW
AND NORSE SETTLEMENTS.
Bounds of the Danelaw
Norse Settlements
YORK
FIVE BURGHS
EAST ANGLIA


Anglo Saxon
ENGLAND
Marshes and inlets
Forests
Chief Monasteries and Minsters†
Roman Sites as EXETER
Dane Towns as Derby
LOTHIAN
ELMET
PEAK
WEALD
Offa's Dyke
Watling Street
Fosse Way
Ickneild Way
Abernethy
Alclwyd (Dumbarton)
Dunbar
Lindisfarne
Bamborough
Melrose
Degsaston
Brunanburh
Heavenfield
Hexham
Tynemouth
Jarrow
Wearmouth
Dacre
Whitby
Windermere
Catterick
Lastingham
Ripon
York
Ribchester
Preston
Beverley
Skelby
Wigan
Manchester
Makerfield
Heathfield
Gainsborough
Torksey
LINCOLN
Bardney
Boston
Bangor
CHESTER
Bangor Is-coed
Doddington
Bakewell
Southwell
Nottingham
Derby
Repton
Stafford
Lichfield
Tamworth
Stamford
Leicester
Shrewsbury
Bridgenorth
Elmham
Norwich
Thetford
Dunwich
Aswardby
Leominster†
Hereford
Pershore
Evesham
Worcester
Coventry
Warwick
Northampton
Thompson
Bedford
Buckingham
Cambridge
Gloucester
Cirencester
Oxford
Aylesbury
Dorchester
Abingdon
Berkhamsted
Colchester
Witham
Maldon
Malmesbury
Ashdon
LONDON
St. Albans
Benfleet
Chippenham
Kingston
Rochester
SHEPPEY
THANET
Minster
Bath
Bradford
Wells
Glastonbury
Athelney
Barnstable
Watchet
Edington
Westbury
Wilton
Warminster
Shaftesbury
WINCHESTER
Chertsey
CANTERBURY
Richborough
DOVER
Hastings
Rye
Appledore
Crediton
EXETER
Axminster
Sherborne
Hampton
Chichester
Warehame
Bridport
Portchester
WIGHT
Swanage
Portsey
WEST WALES
St Bingston Gower

Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester, Derby, Stamford (afterwards termed the *Five Burghs*), with York, Norwich and Cambridge, were the chief. The Danes were the overlords: the natives, if they submitted, were allowed to remain as tillers of the soil. Other Vikings, still unwearied, formed a Great Army, or *Host*, as they called it themselves, under the lead of Halfdene and Guthrum. In 871 this Host seized Reading and fortified it as a base from which to invade Wessex.

By this time Ethelwulf and his two elder sons, each king in turn, had died, courageously fighting, and the third son, Ethelred, was king, with his younger brother, Alfred, as his lieutenant. 871 was the famous Year of Battles. At Englefield, Ashdown, Basing, and Merton, the king and the Etheling (prince) Alfred beat the invaders back to their fort at Reading; then Ethelred fell, and Alfred was crowned king of the West Saxons. Kent, Surrey and Sussex were now always reckoned with Wessex. He was not successful in his first fight, at Wilton, but the Host were ready to parley and accepted a sum of money to evacuate Reading and Wessex. They made a treaty with the men of London, where they quartered themselves for the winter, apparently able to rely on the self-interest of both sides, and for some years London was practically Danish.

For four years after this the Host was busy in destroying, first, Mercia, then Bernicia, till Halfdene's army, satiated, began to settle down in Yorkshire, which they divided among themselves in definite shares (875). In those four years Alfred had rapidly organised the troops of Wessex for the struggle to come. It was to be his task and glory to oppose unyielding resistance to a persistent tide of invasion, to fight a losing fight, year after year, till by dauntless heroism success was at last wrung from disaster. He is the most famous king of England and one of the most famous of Europe.

In 876 Guthrum suddenly led his army from Cambridge across country, doubtless by the Icknield Way and the Roman roads across the Thames, to Wareham in the south of Dorset, close to the land-locked harbour of Poole, always an important shipping centre during the Middle Ages. There a fleet of Vikings from Ireland met them, but there also appeared Alfred with the fyrds of all the shires of Wessex, and one of the sieges characteristic of the age began. The Danes could not break out, the English could not break in. After some time the Danes offered to treat and swore what they professed to hold a specially solemn oath on a great ring of gold to quit Alfred's realm. But, as usual, the oath was false; they slipped out of Wareham by night and rode to Exeter before the pursuit could overtake them. Once behind its Roman walls they could wait for the fleet to join them and convey them elsewhere. But as they came round the headland of Swanage a storm overwhelmed the Viking ships, 120 of which were lost with all their crews, and the Host in Exeter was again beleaguered by the Saxons. After six months of deadlock a treaty was again offered, and the

Danes withdrew from Wessex, but only into Mercia, where some settled down in the fortified towns already mentioned—the core of the district called the Dane-law—while the more fierce prepared for a further attack on Wessex. They were doubtless reinforced by adventurers from an expedition which had that very summer (877) attacked the Seine valley, but had been bought off by the Emperor Charles the Bald, so that by Christmas Guthrum had at least as large an army as before, and planned no mere harrying, but a real conquest of Wessex.

In the dead of winter, while the English were keeping Christmas, a double attack fell on the little state. A brother of Halfdene brought a fleet round to South Wales and thence attacked the North Devon coast, while Guthrum took by assault the royal town of Chippenham and fortified it as a base camp. The surprise was complete; there was no time to collect the fyrd, and the horrible devastations of Guthrum drove the people to instant flight. Some even reached France, a land in no better plight than their own, and the king himself, with his principal followers, took refuge in the marshes of West Somerset. There his island lair can still be seen, the tiny green farm of Athelney (Prince's Isle) between Parret and Tone, only just above the flood level, with the almost adjacent steep hill-fortress (now called Borough Mump) commanding the river passage through the swamps. In these and the neighbouring little islands, inaccessible except to natives who knew the boat-channels and the hidden footways, Alfred in three months organised the forces which made their desperate attack on the Danes in the May of 878. There was probably a considerable population in the district, for the west of Wessex had a very early cloth industry, and much of Somerset and Dorset was royal land, and therefore prosperous.

The thegns of Devonshire had thrown themselves into a fastness near Barnstaple and drawn to them the forces from Hubba's fleet, whom they brilliantly defeated with great slaughter. The fyrds of Somerset, Wilts and Hants gathered in Selwood and under Alfred's command engaged the Danes in a pitched battle at Ethandune, seemingly Edington in Wilts. Guthrum was severely defeated and pursued to a stronghold, where, after a fortnight's siege, he submitted. He and his principal men had to accept baptism and to yield a number of hostages for their observance of their pledge to evacuate Wessex. In other words, the Host had at last to cease ravaging and must settle down in the villages and farms which it had already taken possession of. Guthrum might be the king, but Alfred must be recognised as his overlord. By accepting Christianity, moreover, the Danes were pledged to a code of peaceful conduct. They had to give up stealthy killing and arson, the torture of prisoners, kidnapping English children (as slaves), changing wives and breaking vows; these were sins against the Faith and they were punished by the king; and an acceptance of these Christian rules was necessary

before the English could settle down with them in peace. This is the Peace of Wedmore (879).

There were now three districts of England held by the Danes: (1) Yorkshire, or old Deira, to the north of which, in the land of St. Cuthbert, lay a semi-English region, ruled by Danish vassals; (2) the Dane-law of the Five Burghs, (practically the modern counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland and part of Derbyshire); and (3) East Anglia, or the kingdom of Guthrum. Only the last acknowledged Alfred's overlordship, even nominally. Its boundaries are stated in *Alfred's and Guthrum's Peace* (886) as the Lea, the Ouse and Watling Street. It comprised Norfolk, Cambridge and Suffolk, most of Northamptonshire, and parts of Bedfordshire, Huntingdon and Herts, though the inland forest regions of Essex and Suffolk were probably very little, if at all, under Danish control.

In these three Dane districts the process of settlement was much the same. The newcomers settled in hill or forest regions which were unoccupied, as on the Leicestershire wolds, building new villages, or else they concentrated in defensible spots, such as Stamford, Lincoln and Derby, and ruled the neighbourhood as masters, allowing such of the natives as had escaped death to come out of their hiding-places and farm again in their old homes, rendering tribute or produce to their new lords. From the defended towns the Danes began to trade, now that plundering had ceased. A few places were re-named, *e. g.* Streoneshalch became *Whitby*, Northweorthig, *Derby*. The forms *beck* (stream), *-thorpe* (village), *-by* (farm), *-wick* (creek or haven), *-thwaite* (sloping meadow), *toft* (house), and (later) *-kirk*, mark a Danish or Norwegian founding.

Alfred's victory of 878 secured thirteen years of peace, with but one breach, during which time the king's energy relaid the foundations of civilised life in his kingdom and at the same time created a military system which should be able to face a renewed invasion with better success.

This was done by a threefold organisation of army, fleet and fortresses, partly on old lines, partly on new. The ancient fyrd of the shires was made to serve continuously, by dividing it into two sections; when need arose the one half was called out and remained on duty for a lengthy period, while the other section worked at home at the needful agriculture and other business. Then this second body came out to war and the first returned home. Evidently the whole manhood of each shire was trained and armed. The king's special household troops, the gesiths, were raised to a large number and every man had to be present with the king for one month out of every three; this provided a striking-force always ready for an emergency. As of old, the king gave horses and arms and frequently rewards of land to such followers; service at his court ranked as nobility; the gesiths were termed King's Thegns, and acquired

greater importance than the ordinary stay-at-home thegns, or nobles by descent.

The new elements of Alfred's defensive system were remarkable, and both fleets and forts were improvements on the Danish models which had suggested them. The fleet was intended to meet future invaders before they could land, so that the sea henceforward should be England's frontier. New ships were constantly being built and the design was varied until the king's vessels were at last larger than the Viking boats themselves. To help in the building as well as in the manning of the fleet Alfred obtained Frisian craftsmen or sailors, and his Frisian sea troops, a kind of marines, proved a gallant auxiliary band.

The fortress towns or *burhs* were destined to influence profoundly not only the warfare, but the civil development of the country. From Alfred's time *burh*, *burgh*, *borough*, always means a defensible town, no longer a fenced house. Some places which were already of importance and still had remains of Roman walls (London, Rochester, Winchester, Southampton, Chichester), were restored, and others, perhaps hardly inhabited, but commanding strategetical points (Wareham, Pilton, Oxford) were fortified, perhaps with earthworks such as the Danes had used, and all were colonised by soldiers who became town dwellers. The king appears to have directed the thegns, or lords, of the country district in which the fort was built to provide a sufficient garrison and to see to the maintenance of the fortifications. Moreover the prospect of security and perhaps of comfort was attractive. Privileges, also, of commerce and justice were granted to the citizen-soldiers, to recompense them for their special liability to service, and by these three means the new towns were furnished with courageous and well-trained garrisons.

The one interruption of the peace occurred in 886, when Guthrum was persuaded by a band of oversea Vikings to break his oaths, and Alfred promptly seized the occasion to capture London. He repaired its walls and houses, placed there a garrison, called *cnihts*, and gave it into the charge of his gallant son-in-law Ethelred, a great Mercian nobleman. When Burhred of Mercia resigned his crown and fled to Rome no new king cared to reign in his ravaged land, and Ethelred was content to be Alfred's helper and to allow Mercia and Wessex to coalesce. Oxford was then fortified and garrisoned and placed under Ethelred's governance, and this new fortress, commanding the narrow peninsula between Thames, Cherwell and marsh, which opened the natural road to the southern midlands, was henceforth the key which opened or barred the way from London to the midlands and the Severn valley, until the days of Henry II.

Guthrum was peaceable for the rest of his life, and when in 892 a final tide of invasion tested Alfred's system to the utmost, the years of organisation were proved to have accomplished their task. In that year the Great Host, which had been active for several years

on the Continent, having suffered a severe defeat in Flanders, turned once more upon England. Two hundred and fifty ships, far outnumbering Alfred's fleet, sailed into the harbour of Lymne, eighty more, under the ferocious chief, Hasting, himself, came up the Thames estuary and harboured behind Sheppey Island. The struggle lasted four years. The English won the first successes, but lost the advantage through guile. The two Viking bands attempted to unite and take London, but the rapidity with which the English troops turned out enabled the king to beset Hasting, while his son, the Etheling Edward, caught the other force at Farnham and defeated it. A large number, however, escaped and fled across Thames, while Alfred was being hoodwinked by Hasting. The cunning Viking pretended to surrender, asked for the rite of baptism, swore solemn oaths of peace, accepted Alfred's sponsorship and his gifts and then suddenly escaped across the estuary to a good base at Benfleet, where he succeeded in obtaining recruits and assistance from the Danes of East Anglia and Northumbria. For three more years Viking ships harried the south and south-western coasts while the Host swept to and fro across the midlands, but the *burhs* of Wessex proved impregnable; neither Exeter nor Chichester could be taken, while the *cnihts* of London, under Edward and Ethelred, stormed the Benfleet camp, carried off a great booty as well as the wives and children of the warriors, and, most important of all, destroyed the ships. The burnt remains of this fleet were discovered in the nineteenth century, when a station was being built on the spot which had in 893 been the harbour.

Alfred, Edward and Ethelred persistently followed up the Host, starving it out of each refuge. The Danes vainly tried to wear out their slower pursuers by hurrying first from Mercia to the Upper Severn, where, at Buttington, near Welshpool, earthworks, bones and fragments testify to a battle. In the end they took refuge behind the empty walls of Roman Chester, whence starvation soon drove them across England to Mersea Island. There, they sent for their ships, which rowed up the Lea, but Alfred and the Londoners dammed the river and the ships stuck fast in the marsh. The boats were triumphantly drawn to London, a valuable booty, but the Vikings rode off to the lower Severn and entrenched near Bridgnorth. There they at last gave up hopes of conquering Wessex and disbanded. Some went to Northumbria, some to East Anglia, and settled down; the irreconcilables went to raid again in unhappy France. "By the mercy of God," says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, "the Host had not utterly broken the English race, but during these three years they were much more broken by a plague among cattle and men, and most of all by this, that many of the best king's thegns in the land died during these years."

Except for occasional piracy the remainder of Alfred's reign, four years, was peaceful; the reconquest of the Danish districts

was left for his worthy son and daughter to accomplish. Edward the Elder (meaning First) succeeded his father as king immediately, but he was resisted by the northern Danes, and he and Ethelred of Mercia prepared for the inevitable conflict, for to leave the Danish kingdom of York, closely allied with the Dublin Vikings, to be independent would mean perpetual raiding.

Alfred's fleet and military system were maintained and improved; Edward collected more than a hundred war ships in the Straits when a Viking invasion threatened, but the Northmen did not venture to attack; their leader, Rollo or Rolf—called "The Ganger" because he was too big and heavy for any horse and had to march on foot—accepted in France the cession of a great tract of territory on the lower Seine, and there he and his host settled down as lords, much as Guthrum had done in England. This was the founding of the Duchy of Normandy. It was the English Danes who finally broke the peace and gave Edward and his sister Ethelflæd, the famous Lady of Mercia, the golden opportunity of pressing rapidly the work of re-conquest. The Alderman Ethelred and his wife, Ethelflæd, had already colonised and re-fortified the "waste chester" on the Dee. His last deed was to join with Edward when the Danes burst into Mercia, and defeat them in a pitched battle near Wednesfield. Then he died, but his widow, who inherited her father's genius for rule and warfare, continued to govern the Mercians and to maintain, hand-in-hand with her brother, a steady pressure on the Danes. By garrisoning points, which guarded river crossings and junctions of roads, they rapidly pushed the English frontier eastwards year by year.

Ethelflæd worked from the line of the Severn and Dee (Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury and Chester to the Trent and the Mersey), Edward, from London and Oxford. Each advance was guarded by forts, or fortified towns, garrisoned by soldier-citizens like the *cnihts* of London. At last, in 916, the Lady stormed Derby and Edward took Colchester and secured the harbours of Essex by a battle at Maldon, after which the army of Cambridge and East Anglia surrendered. Next year the remaining portions of the Dane-law gave in, Stamford, Lincoln and Nottingham to Edward—Leicester to the Lady, to whom also the people of York and all Northumbria sent to offer their submission. Ethelflæd returned from this great triumph to her deathbed in the Mercian royal town of Tamworth. Her brother buried her in Gloucester minster beside the Alderman Ethelred, and there accepted the homage of the Mercian nobles and of a number of Welsh princes who had been vassals of Ethelflæd. He also completed her line of defence on the Mersey by fortifying Manchester, so as to block the best line of communication between the Danes of York and those of Ireland.

Next year (919) witnessed King Edward's final triumph; as he was building a new *burh* at Bakewell he received the submission of the sovereigns of Northumbria and Welsh Strathclyde, and also

some kind of homage from the king of the Picts and Scots, Constantine III, who " took King Edward for father and lord," and thus tried to obtain protection from the Vikings who had been ravaging Scotland ever since 870.

On Edward's death he was at once succeeded by his eldest son, Athelstan, to whom the princes of Northumbria, Wales, Strathclyde, and the king of Scots gave their submission at Dacre, near Ullswater.

The Vikings, however, were firmly established in the Orkneys and the opposite shores, as well as in the Hebrides and the coasts of Argyle, and Constantine made a league with them and with the Irish and Northumbrian Danes. The fighting which resulted came to a climax at the battle of Brunanburh (937) in Dumfriesshire. This was the final and crowning victory, and justified Athelstan's proud title of " King of all Britain." He was the first British monarch so powerful that continental sovereigns courted him; his court was a place of refuge and a home of training for young princes, and his sisters were sought in marriage by foreign princes.

Athelstan's next successors, his brothers, first Edmund, then Edred, were also accepted as kings and overlords by the different districts, but the incessant turmoils at York at length constrained Edred to expel its last Danish king, Eric Bloodaxe, and the north had to recognise itself as an integral part of England and be satisfied with ruling noblemen called, not ealdormen, but *earls ;* the Danish title had been *jarl.*

On a somewhat different principle Edmund had dealt with the debatable land of the mountains and lakes in the north-west. Originally Welsh, and partly colonised by Scots, it had become largely settled by Norwegian Vikings. Edmund reduced them to submission and then gave their district, *Cumbria* (Cumberland and Westmorland) as a sort of loan to Malcolm, king of the Picts and Scots, seemingly in return for some sort of recognition of his own supremacy.

It was under Edward and Athelstan and their next successors that England north of the Thames was divided into shires. The fortified burghs of Ethelflæd and the Danish towns were taken as centres, and round each was formed a *shire.* Few of the old shires have such obviously capital towns as these, which gave their names to their shires, and became what are modernly termed County-towns. Each had its alderman and its king's shire-reeve, and most had also a bishop. To " make a district shireland " henceforth meant the introduction of English law, royal justice, regular shire-courts, regular collection of royal taxes or food rents by the shire-reeve, and the training of the fyrd, or military levy by the alderman.

To the ancient Saxon shires (*see* p. 41) those next to the Thames had perhaps been added before the Danish troubles began

—Buckinghamshire (with its two capitals, Aylesbury and Buckingham), Oxfordshire, and the two divisions of the Worcester diocese —Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, which, like the Hereford district, were never occupied by the enemy. But not until after Alfred's death were organised (*a*) the Mercian shires recovered by Ethelflaed: Warwick-, Stafford-, Shrewsbury- and Chester- shires, and (*b*) the shires conquered by Edward, which formed a block thrust between East Anglia and the Dane-law of the Five Burghs: Hertford-, Bedford-, Huntingdon- and Northampton- shires. Last would come (*c*) the land of the Five Burghs: Derby-, Leicester-, Nottingham- and Lincoln- shires, and (*d*) East Anglia itself; Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk, the last two having been small, separate districts before the Danes, but so much ruined and depopulated that they now were grouped in one bishopric.

Boundaries on the east, among the fens, could hardly be precisely drawn as yet. There was no Rutland, and for a long period, until after the Norman Conquest, the Isles of Ely and of Axholm and the Soke of Peterborough remained separate units, like St. Cuthbert's Land in the far north, and St. Oswald's-Law in the west. To this day the "Parts of Lindsey" and "Parts of Kesteven," distinct districts even in the present system of local government, recall the far-off time when wide stretches of marsh and mere lying along the courses of the Trent and Witham almost isolated the fortress city of Lincoln, and severed these two regions from each other and from Holland, behind the fen and on the coast. Kesteven was largely forest, Lindsey open and more thickly inhabited.

The shires of the Saxon period ended upon the wild moors north of the Derbyshire Peak-land.[1] Beyond these and the marshes of the Don lay the Danish sub-kingdom of York, which included the region afterwards made by the Plantagenets into Lancaster-shire, except for its northern limb, which was still part of Cumbria, and a slender strip by the Mersey, from Manchester to Warrington, which was nominally, if precariously, the frontier-line of Mercia.

Derbyshire was, then, the actual frontier district of Edward the Elder and his successors, and the submissions rendered at Bakewell and Dore suggest that Peak-land was, in the Saxon era, more easily accessible than in later centuries. Probably the numerous Roman roads were still in tolerably good condition, for the lead-mines which made it valuable to the Romans, and the surface iron-workings, were as highly prized by the Saxons.

Perhaps, since Bakewell and Derby were not the only fortified places, a part of the inhabitants of this district may have been trained garrison troops, like those of Alfred's *burhs* earlier, and for the same purpose. The forests, which choked the dales and covered almost the whole of Nottinghamshire, hindered

[1] For reasons of space the shire names and divisions are omitted from the maps in this volume. They should be noted in any ordinary atlas.

agricultural and town development and were for much longer infested by wolves, in the hunting or trapping whereof the men of Derbyshire became so skilful that Henry I, afterwards, had a few of them sent to Maine to teach the natives how to clear their own forests.

PRINCIPAL EVENTS

735.	Death of Bede.
757–796.	Offa, king of Mercia and overlord of England.
	Alcuin goes from York to Tours.
	First water-mills.
	Vikings destroy Lindisfarne, 793; and Jarrow, 795.
802.	Egbert, king of Wessex.
806.	Charles the Great, emperor.
827.	General submission to Egbert at Dore.
839–857.	Ethelwulf, king of Wessex.
843.	Kenneth II, king of Picts and Scots.
847.	Northmen defeated in Somerset.
855.	Danes winter in Sheppey.
	Danes sack Winchester, 860; take York, 867; and Nottingham, 868.
857.	Ethelbald, king of Wessex.
860.	Ethelbert, king of Wessex.
870.	Edmund slain in East Anglia.
865–871.	Ethelred I, king of Wessex: Danes invade Wessex.
871.	Battles of Englefield, Reading, Ashdown, Basing, Merton, Wilton.
871–899.	Alfred, king of Wessex.
	Danes divide Yorkshire, 875; and East Mercia (5 Burghs), 877.
878.	Battle of Ethandun; Peace of Wedmore, 879.
880.	Danes divide East Anglia.
886.	Alfred takes London.
893–897.	Last Danish invasion defeated.
	Alfred's Laws.
899–925.	Edward the Elder, king of Wessex.
	Reconquest of the Five Burghs (Danelaw).
	Submission of East Anglia, 921; and Wales, 922.
924.	General submission at Bakewell.
925–939.	Athelstan, king of Wessex, and overking of Britain.
926.	General submission at Dacre.
937.	Battle of Brunanburh.
939.	Edmund I, Dunstan's career begins.
946.	Edred.
c. 900–40.	Founding of boroughs.
	Completion of the shires.
946.	Edwy.
959.	Edgar the Peaceful.
960–988.	Dunstan, archbishop: monastic revival.
	"Edgar's Law" (settlement of local government).

VI

ENGLAND UNDER THE HOUSE OF ALFRED

As treaties, laws, and charters were now put in writing much oftener than formerly, we know more about the condition of the English people after Alfred's reign than before.

It is clear that the long wars had produced much alteration in habits of life and thought.

The gravest calamity was the almost entire destruction of the minsters and their schools, and of the monasteries, which had contained stores of intellectual and artistic treasures. The clergy and monks were dead; their books and pictures and sacred vessels, bells and musical instruments, had all disappeared. The implements they had used, the treasures which had been given to them or placed with them for safety, were gone: carved chests, wrought metal-work, beautiful vestments, agricultural and metal-workers' tools, which had served as models for the people, had all been carried away. Nearly all the implements and materials of civilised life had to be made or collected afresh from the beginning, and few were the skilled men who knew how to write, or build, or work in metals. That Alfred himself could read and write in Latin seemed to his early biographer a kind of miracle.

King Alfred, therefore, had to take in hand the enormous task not only of facing the Danish enemy year after year, but of re-creating civilised life. For two generations a ferocious warfare had been the ordinary course. The observances of religion had almost ceased; schools had, of course, disappeared when the teachers were all massacred, or had died in the wilds; the youths who were growing up when Alfred overcame Guthrum were growing up to a heathen life. The only occupations left were fighting and farming; courage and perseverance were the sole virtues. Naturally, many men had gone back to savage ways, and robbery and violence prevailed among the English themselves.

Alfred's first care was to supply schooling. But he could find very few priests south of the Humber who really understood Latin; north of it there were probably none; in the east of England it is doubtful if any clergy survived. Only here and there in western Mercia and in Somerset was any trace of religion remaining. The king, therefore, had to gather a few scholars together to form a

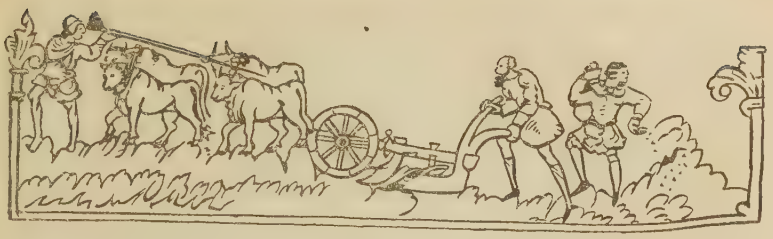
DIOCESES, I
before the
DANISH INVASIONS.
LINDISFARNE
Holy I.
HEXHAM
WHITHERN
YORK
STOW
LICHFIELD
ELMHAM
LEICESTER
and
DUNWICH
HEREFORD
WORCESTER
DORCHESTER
LONDON
ROCHESTER
CANTERBURY
SHERBORNE
WINCHESTER
SELSEY

DIOCESES, II
under the HOUSE of
ALFRED.
St Cuthberts Land
Y O R K
(BANGOR)
LICHFIELD
DORCHESTER
ELMHAM
HEREFORD
(St DAVIDS)
WORCESTER
LONDON
ROCHESTER
CANTERBURY
RAMSBURY
WELLS
WINCHESTER
SELSEY
CREDITON
St GERMANS

nucleus. Plegmund, his archbishop, was a Mercian, and with him were two or three other Mercians able to read and write and to teach. Asser and Grimbald, Alfred's own chaplains and helpers, came, the former from Wales, the latter from Rheims. A learned monk from Old-Saxony in Germany, one John, was brought to manage the little monastery which Alfred founded at Athelney as a thank-offering for his deliverance. Plegmund held again the school for clergy at Canterbury, and Alfred had one for boys in his palace at Winchester. But it was not possible to restore the vanished houses of religion, for scarcely any one wished to enter monastic life, nor, indeed, could many have been spared, after the great massacres, from the needful toils of war and agriculture. So the king contented himself with restoring as many churches as possible and re-founding the ancient company of canons at Winchester and a nunnery at Shaftesbury. But the scholarship and poetry and piety of earlier days could never be recovered, and the once learned and pious north, especially, long remained plunged in barbarism. It is almost certain that in each burgh which Alfred or his son and daughter founded, a minster church with its school was established, and a little later Athelstan restored the churches and centres of learning at Ripon, Chester-le-Street and Beverley, and perhaps Doncaster, as the firstfruits of his mastery of Yorkshire. As it was no longer possible to expect Latin to be generally mastered, Alfred set to work to provide means for studying the elements of knowledge in the English tongue. He himself translated from the Latin several books which contained the most useful knowledge accessible to him. Copies were then written out and given to the bishops or the head teachers. The chief of these books were: *Pastoral Care*, a book to teach the bishops and clergy, from a work of Gregory the Great; a Geography of the World (from Orosius), a part of which Alfred himself wrote, so as to bring it up to date; Bede's History; the Psalms; a Selection of Religious Thoughts from St. Augustine (who died 430); and a book of Philosophy by Boëthius, the last Roman philosopher (525). He also had a careful record kept of the events of his own time, which was the beginning of the famous Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; copies were kept in several monasteries, where clerks could add interesting news; and this was the origin and model of the chronicles compiled in many English abbeys, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, which provide much of our knowledge of ancient England.

Other teachers, too, had to be fetched from abroad, to train men in masonry, in metal-working, and in other arts in which Englishmen had formerly been skilled; and Alfred's own houses and churches were erected as models which his thegns strove to copy, so far as they could, in their own villages.

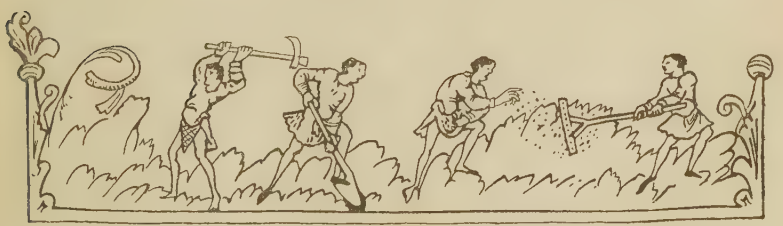
So ignorant had all men become that Alfred found his thegns (ealdormen, king's thegns, thegns and reeves may all be termed



PLOUGHING.

FEASTING.

WOOD-CUTTING.



HEDGING, DIGGING AND SOWING.

(Illustrations of The Months from a Saxon Calendar.)

thegns) frequently unaware what decisions, or *dooms*, they ought to give in the *moots* over which they presided. Law was a matter of custom (as with all the German and Scandinavian peoples), and was carried in the memory of the older and wiser men. But the forty-six years of war (834–880) had greatly broken the traditions, and Alfred therefore made a collection of the best laws of former kings, adding to them some of his own, as well as the Ten Commandments; and this code he directed the reeves and ealdormen to learn.

But warfare had caused not only loss, but new developments, of which the three most important were: (1) the rapid growth of a custom begun earlier—*Commendation;* (2) the weakening of family and tribal ties as the foundation of society, and in consequence the attempt to replace them by a kind of substitute—either *tithings* or *gilds*, which helped towards the observance of better order; and (3) the establishment of towns, which has already been mentioned.

(1) *Commendation* was a system which developed all over Western Europe when people found that the single free family was not strong enough to defend its members from enemies. From the most ancient times some men had been braver or wiser than others, and had become leaders or lords of others who trusted and followed them. When the English first reached Britain (as the ancient names of many villages reveal) there were numerous lords whose followers settled beside them and looked to the lord for protection and guidance, rendering him in return some form of obedience or payment in produce. When times grew troubled men who had been their own masters would seek out a lord and ask to be included in his company of men. The plan was a natural one for mutual help. The *commended* man was not servile; he was reckoned a free man still, only in practice he was a kind of retainer. He *commended* himself to the lord, promising him obedience in return for protection to himself, his family and his home. But this soon caused his home and land to be reckoned as a part, or a dependency, of the lord's estate, for the English social system was based upon the land and district in which the people dwelt, *e. g.* (*a*) a reeve was a reeve of a *place*, not of a clan; (*b*) Mercian, Kentish, or Wessex law was the law recognised in that district, not the law of individuals born there; a man who went from Kent to Mercia would have to live according to Mercian law, whereas on the continent a man carried his law about with him, making great confusion.

(*c*) Similarly, taxes were paid by the estate, not by the individual—the hides owed the tax; just as the hundred was a district, not 100 persons. As all wealth came from the land, this was a fair way of distributing responsibility. The owner of large and rich estates paid more and was bound to do more public work than the poor peasant. The system resulted in the lord having to hold the local court of the hundred, and being

responsible for the men who lived in the district, or for those who had commended themselves to him. This was called "having the sac and soc" over the men. By the time of Athelstan it was necessary to make a new law about "the lordless man from whom no law can be got," and whose kinsmen were ordered to find a lord for him.

In return for the hard work which thegns now had to do, the kings were granting to them estates, which they kept while in the royal service. This was the case also on the Continent, and is the beginning of what was later termed *feudalism*.

(2) The time was passing away when all men dwelt among their kindred and could claim the help of third and fourth cousins in quarrels and lawsuits. Moreover, a fairer system was needed to fix responsibility on the misdoer instead of on his entire family.

A kind of mutual police system was therefore devised. Where a man was attached to a lord, this lord must be responsible for his behaviour. Elsewhere (and often overlapping the lordship) there was a method which got the name of *tithing*. Groups of ten men (twelve in the Danish districts) were formed, with a head-man for each group, whose members were mutually responsible. If one did wrong the others must bring him to the moot for judgment, or else pay his fines. Every man, that is, was expected to have either a lord or a surety who would see that he did not run away if he thieved or otherwise misbehaved. Of course, it was not possible to keep to the actual number *ten*, and in the south, at all events, the *tithing* soon became a small district, though its head continued to be called the tenth-man or tithing-man. In the towns, moreover (where probably the tithings originated), men often formed themselves into voluntary societies for mutual friendship and religious observance. These societies were named *gilds*, and they were destined to grow into great importance in town civilisation. (To *gyld* meant to *pay*.)

(3) The military origin of many of our towns has already been described. In order to reward the soldiers and to encourage new settlers privileges were bestowed on townsmen which in course of time developed and became extremely valuable—privileges (*a*) of trade and (*b*) of justice.

(*a*) A *burh* or *borough* was certain to have a market, or place where buying and selling was permitted, and the country-folk round about were forbidden to sell anything worth more than twenty pence except at the market. This was not a measure of tyranny, but of honesty. The Anglo-Saxons were inveterate thieves; cupboards and locks were rare, while things were few, and therefore valuable enough to outweigh risks. So to discourage the incessant thefts (especially of cattle), with their resultant crop of violence, lawsuits, fines, and general ill-feeling, sale and purchase came to be actually forbidden unless made in public before witnesses. Among the crowd which came to the market it was probable that any stolen property

would be recognised, and the market was controlled by reeves, before whom goods were handed over and money paid out, for as there were no bills or receipts it was necessary to have a witness. There was even a clause in Alfred and Guthrum's peace (886) that all men should have warrantors when cattle-selling took place.

(*b*) For the accomplishment of justice it was necessary to hold monthly *moots* in each hundred. To them came all the representatives from the villages—the reeve, who was the head official, and usually the priest and four men besides. These formed the public, as witnesses and approving judges of what was settled. But the men of the *burhs* had law-courts of their own, and did not have to go to the hundred moots. This privilege was a very great convenience to them, and it was the beginning, also, of a slow improvement in the ways of securing justice.

Above the borough and hundred courts stood the shire-court, composed of representatives from the lower moots, and presided over by the bishop and the alderman, sitting side by side. Here every kind of question could be settled, but if something very difficult, or perhaps some obstinate great man, was beyond the wit, or the authority, of the shire-men, they would go to the king in person.

The law which was administered in these moots or meetings, whether the hundred-moot, or borough-moot, or the superior court of the shire, was primitive in its spirit and clumsy in its methods. The kings made great efforts to put down violence and get thieves caught and punished. As there was not (and would not for many long centuries be) any kind of police, the inhabitants of every village were bidden to make it their business to catch criminals. Any one who saw a man making off, "red-handed," with something not his was to leave his work and run after the thief, shouting, "Stop, thief!"—a cry which must be taken up by all who heard and who could join in the chase. This was called "raising the hue and cry," and if the villagers caught the thief "hand-having or back-bearing," they might punish him then and there. But if they did not catch him they must at least follow him to the boundary of the next hundred, where the reeve of that place must join them and carry on the chase and so on till the runaway was caught. When caught, he was handed over to the reeve of the first village, who had to keep him safe till the next shire-moot day, and produce him at the meeting for punishment.

Punishment was usually by fines: the stolen thing or beast must be restored, with an extra payment as "damages," and a money fine as well had to be paid by the culprit to the lord of the hundred or to the king, as the case might be, for having "broken the peace." A few values were fixed: an ox was worth thirty pence; its bell, a shilling. But a reeve who refused to chase a thief was fined thirty shillings. The fine (or *wite*) for neglecting or breaking the law the first time was thirty shillings, but the third time

WATCHING SHEEP.

CUTTING WOOD.

HAYMAKING.

HARVESTING.

(From a Saxon Calendar.)

120 shillings. Crimes of violence were also dealt with by fine. An ordinary freeman's *wer* (or compensation for his life) was 200 shillings, but a thegn's was 1200. As money was extremely scarce then, it is certain that most men could not pay their fines; in that case, unless kinsmen or sureties would pay for them, the criminal was otherwise punished by being cast out of the protection of the law. He was proclaimed in the shire-moot to be an outlaw: "he bears a wolf's head and he may slay him who can come at him." An outlaw's life was miserable and dangerous, and his enemy probably caught him sooner or later.

But there were many cases where law-breakers were not caught "red-handed," but where suspicion fell on some individual, who would be accused in the moot. If he denied the charge he had to clear himself by "coming twelve-handed" to the next moot; that is, bringing twelve men of at least equal rank as his "oath-helpers," who would swear solemnly that they believed his word and held him innocent. This was called "waging his law," and was accepted as proving his innocence. The ceremony was a religious one: a priest (in a hundred moot) or the bishop (in the shire court) brought a sacred relic or a book of Scripture and administered the oath to each man personally. To swear falsely would be an act of direct perjury and blasphemy, and it was probable that only a man really known to be innocent could collect so many oath-helpers.

But there was another method, which also was held to be a religious ceremony. If the accused did not dare to appeal to the oaths of his friends and his lord—to "put himself upon the country," as it was termed—he would be "sent to the ordeal" of fire or water. After solemn protests by accuser and defendant and three days' prayer and fasting the accused was taken to the church, where an iron bar weighing one pound was made red-hot, or a stone was put into a cauldron of boiling water, and the suspect had to pick it up and carry it three paces. Then his hand was wrapped in a cloth, which the priest sealed up, offering a prayer that, if he were innocent, it might heal. After three days the priest undid the cloth, and if the hand was still blistered the man was declared to be guilty.

Or else, perhaps, if there was no church near the village, he was taken to a deep pond and bound. The priest blessed the water and adjured it to reject the guilty but receive the innocent. A rope was tied round the man, who was let down till he was an ell and a half deep under water; then if he sank he was held innocent and was hauled out, but if he floated he was guilty. Usually the ordeal left a man guilty, but the people supposed that a miracle would occur to save the innocent; and this mode of trial was still in use down to the thirteenth century.

It was because these rough-and-ready ways of dealing punishment often caused the deaths of innocent persons, that the churchmen succeeded in securing that a church should be a sanctuary.

If a man pursued by the crowd could reach the church and fly to the altar's side, he was safe for the time being. Nobody might drag him away. When churches became more numerous, this right of asylum should have been restricted, for many criminals escaped punishment. Certain churches had stronger powers of sanctuary than others. At Durham there is still to be seen the ancient knocker which the refugee must clang to bring the watchman who would let him in.

A further means of guarding against evil-doing lay in the powers of the bishops to deal with morals, their sentences were carried out by the lay judges, and the final punishment of excommunication, which placed the sinner outside the fellowship of Christians, was practically outlawry, and usually reduced the criminal to submission.

The work of Alfred was carried on ably by his son Edward, his grandsons Athelstan, Edmund and Edred, and his great-grandson Edgar, and it is clear that the ravages of the Danes in material wealth were repaired more rapidly and easily than the havoc in mental and spiritual conditions. This is seen by the rules stated for raising men to nobility. At the very time when many free farming men were "commending" themselves to an overlord, others were growing rich, and acquiring more lands of their own. Such a "churl," when he obtained five hides of land—the usual taxable unit—and had a church in the village for his dependents, and exercised rights of justice over them, would also be recognised by the king as a man able and due to give public service. He might be assigned a place in the king's hall, with some office, and he was then declared to be a thegn, or nobleman. The same rank was accorded to a merchant who had travelled thrice overseas in his own ship, and to a scholar who had taken orders and had distinguished himself by learning and holy life. There was, therefore, neither then nor at any later period, any permanent class division among the English. They might change their sphere of life, if they were able; and while eminence was rewarded, the wealthy were also bound to contribute their time and energy in the royal, that is the public, service.

It is evident that throughout the ninth and tenth centuries the whole well-being of the nation seems to have hinged upon the personality of the sovereign. The English were a slow, unenterprising race, devoted to old customs and uninterested in ideas outside their own villages. The king they understood to be their leader and representative. His incessant travelling up and down his small kingdom made him and his court well known, and the heroism and public spirit of Alfred and his descendants made them also trusted and beloved. What the king commanded, therefore, was obeyed, and where he led the people followed. This placed a heavy responsibility upon the sovereign, and it also made him all-important to the nation. This new position was recognised first

in the time of Alfred, who decreed that an attack on the king's life should no longer be treated as an act that could be compensated by paying a *wer*, but should be "botless"; the traitor must die, because in killing the king he was striking at the nation's safety. This was sadly proved when Alfred's grandson, King Edmund, as he sat at meat, in the simple manner of the time, in his barn-like hall at Pucklechurch in Gloucestershire, was suddenly assaulted and murdered by a robber outlaw. Edmund was still young and his sons only children. His brother Edred, therefore, was chosen by the wisemen to succeed him, but he was stricken by sickness, and died in a few years, so that Edwy, the elder son of Edmund, had to be crowned while still a lad. Instantly dissensions broke out between the Danes and the Saxons, between Wessex and Mercia, and between the landed nobles and the royal officials. The same quarrels hindered the much-needed effort to improve religious and moral conditions, in which the famous Dunstan took a great part, and which occupied the period from the accession of Edmund to that of Ethelred II.

Edwy the Fair (956) seems to have been a self-indulgent spendthrift, who deeply offended the general feeling of the people and the nobility. He rejected the advice of Edred's minister, Dunstan, and exiled him to Ghent. Hereupon the powerful alderman of East Anglia and his sons, supported by King Edward's widow, the grandmother of Edwy and Edgar, revolted, crowned Edgar as king of England north of the Thames, and left to Edwy the shires south of the river. He died two years later and all England took Edgar, "The Peaceful," as king.

It was a prosperous time (959–975), afterwards remembered as a kind of golden age. The king was acknowledged as overlord by all the princes of Wales and the North, and (in 973) Edgar held a grand demonstration of his royalty, being crowned at Bath [1] by the two archbishops, with a religious rite which was ever after the model for English coronations. Then he sailed with a great fleet to Chester, where eight vassal kings are said to have met him and even (says a legend) to have rowed him in his barge upon the Dee.

The reign of Edgar was the ministry of Dunstan and of the younger aldermen of East Anglia, especially Ethelwine, called "the friend of God" from his zeal for monastic reform.

Although, since the Danish invasions, few Englishmen were prepared to become monks, many great persons were anxious to found religious houses. No other way was known to them in which they could consecrate their wealth to the service of God. They therefore still built and endowed minsters, and they gave them into the care of colleges of canons who were secular (*i. e.* not monastic) clergy. They were priests, but not being vowed to any Rule they

[1] Kingston (now Kingston-on-Thames), had been the coronation place of the kings since Edward the Elder, and probably long before.

HUNTING.

THRESHING.

GROUP ROUND A FIRE.

HAWKING.

(From a Saxon Calendar.)

were usually married and lived in their own houses with their families. The endowments being rich, the nobles secured the canonries for their own kin, who often lived much like other thegns, sometimes paying so little attention to their duties that many a minster and cathedral became ruinous, while the spiritual needs of the people were neglected.

The same process had taken place on the continent, but there, during the time of our King Athelstan, a movement of reform had begun at the monastery of Clugny in Burgundy, which had spread to some of the French religious houses. The Rule of St. Benedict was restored by the abbot of Clugny, with such changes and additions as suited newer times. This reformed Benedictine rule was learned by Archbishop Oda and by other bishops and abbots at the monastery of Fleury, near Orleans, and as they admired the asceticism of the monks they wished to turn the English canons into monks, supposing that the more extreme the rule of self-denial was, the better it would be kept. That this meant a sweeping change in system, substituting secluded monks for parochial clergy, did not hinder them, for their object was, less to provide spiritual help for the population, than to please Heaven by maintaining companies of saints perpetually at prayer, and certainly the monks upheld a higher standard.

Three kings, Edmund, Edred and Edgar, supported the reformers heartily, and so also did the common people, who greatly reverenced the ascetics, thinking their mere presence to be sanctifying, and perhaps looking eagerly for the lavish charity which they were certain to bestow. But most of the nobility, especially in Mercia, resented the change. They considered that as the endowments had been largely bestowed by their own forefathers, their families had some claim on them; the superior holiness of the monks did not make up for the loss of schooling and of such parochial work as good canons would do, and they were indignant at the high-handed methods of the kings and their reforming bishops. When Ethelwold bishop of Winchester (for instance) got Edgar's consent to turn out the canons from the famous Old Minster, he brought the monks into the cathedral in the middle of divine service, and by his side strode a king's thegn. They entered the choir, and the thegns, interrupting the service, commanded the canons to choose instantly which they would do: "Either begone, or put on the monk's gown." The unhappy canons had to depart at once, and the minster, with all its possessions, was then and there given over to the monks. In the same manner did Edgar and Ethelwine clear the minsters of East Anglia and Essex of the canons whose lawful homes they had always been, and this although in most cases foreigners had to be brought over to inhabit the newly formed monasteries. It was at this time that many ancient foundations—Glastonbury, Ely, Peterborough, etc.—became abbeys of monks, instead of colleges of canons.

Dunstan, the friend and counsellor of Edmund, Edred and Edgar in succession, supported the monastic movement, though his own energies were chiefly directed towards more practical reforms. He was quite a young man when Edmund made him chief canon of Glastonbury, and he had for some time observed the strict life of a monk himself before the drastic changes of Edgar were made. But Dunstan never compelled any one else to take monastic vows, though his influence naturally led many to do so; he became famous as a great teacher, a purifier of morals, and an organiser of the native clergy. Edgar made him Bishop of Worcester and London and then Archbishop of Canterbury, and he tirelessly urged on clergy and laity alike the practice of less coarse and selfish ways of life.

His injunctions to the bishops and clergy tell something of the national habits during the time (960-988) of his arch-episcopate. He insisted that every priest should live and work in his own parish, should celebrate divine service regularly and preach on Sundays. He must also procure a book with the services correctly written out, and use this instead of trusting to memory. Nor ought the priests to go to sit in the alehouse, drinking and jesting with the farming folk, but rather to practise reading good books at home. Parents were bidden to bring their children for baptism, and themselves to teach them the Creed and the Lord's Prayer (in English), and to bring them to the bishop, when old enough, to be confirmed.

The words of divine service were still spoken in Latin, as Augustine had originally brought them from Rome; the missionaries of that early age did not and could not try to translate them, for the simple reason that there were no equivalent expressions in the barbarous languages. By the time that those languages had become more developed, so that the prayers could have been rendered into English or French, Latin had become so firmly established as the one tongue for writing and for all important matters that it would have seemed a disrespectful mockery to alter the words of the church services, and probably no one ever thought of doing so. People were well acquainted with the general meaning of the services, and, from constant hearing, recognised the sound of many phrases, while those who had been to school perhaps knew the English of much. But the sermon was always in English, and in the tenth century many *homilies* (as they were termed) were written by good preachers for the parish clergy to use. Most of them explain to the congregation the faith of the Christian Church and the meaning of the services. And this was much needed, for the long Danish wars had re-introduced heathenish customs. For instance, Archbishop Oda had found it necessary to condemn the custom of *wed-ding* (pledging) instead of marrying. Wedding meant that a couple would pledge themselves for one year, and at its close agree either to continue *wedded* longer or to

separate and try other partners. This extraordinary custom was rife in the north, where even a bishop allowed his daughter to wed in this manner. He had given to her six estates which really belonged to his cathedral church, and these she conveyed, as her dowry, to three successive husbands and bequeathed to her son so that they became his hereditary property, and were, of course, lost from the endowment of the minster. This is a good instance of the ease with which everything became hereditary: in many places there were hereditary parish clergy, and even after the Norman Conquest there were some in the north.

It is evident that in Dunstan's time almost every village south of the Trent had its church and was a parish; though in the north parishes were very much larger, and he took pains to provide the churches in his successive dioceses of Worcester, London, and Canterbury with sacred vessels, priests' vestments, bells, and sometimes with an organ, much like a harmonium, fitted with bellows and tall pipes. He could make all these things with his own hands with a skill which seemed to the people miraculous, and he taught others, and urged them to these works and to writing and illustrating books, as he himself did, saying that they were sacred tasks, since the churches and schools were almost helpless without such instruments. In short, after Alfred and his children and grandchildren, Dunstan was the greatest restorer of English civilisation after the Danish ravages. Himself a great teacher, he begged the priests to keep schools for the children, and to train them not only in reading and singing, but in some useful handicraft as well. And it is clear, from a description given by the famous schoolmaster of Winchester, Ælfric,[1] that in the schools not only free men's sons, but the sons of the unfree, and boy monks, sat side by side and had equal opportunities. Ælfric wrote a Latin grammar and other similar books for his boys to learn from. Such schools for the sons of nobles and others were not uncommon in the boroughs. What Dunstan wanted was that every village should have its school also, an ideal which was not to be then, nor for long ages, attained.

As archbishop, Dunstan also laid down rules for the discipline of sinners, aiming at making them penitent and discouraging others from imitating them. Those who had sinned grievously were usually forbidden to enter the church till they repented. Dunstan ordained that they must prove their repentance by doing something self-denying. The rich were bidden to build or repair churches, to succour the poor, widows and orphans, to free their own slaves, to build bridges at dangerous fords, or causeways through marshy places. Besides such works of charity for their fellow-christians they must also fast and pray, or perhaps go on a pilgrimage; for, he said, "It is the most right way for every man to wreak his misdeeds upon himself." At the same time he invented a practical

[1] See *The Schools of Medieval England*, A. F. Leach (1915), for most interesting detail.

mode of helping people to fight against the universal vice of drunkenness. He made drinking-cups, such as were passed round among the company at table, fitted with tiny pegs, that when healths were drunk each man should only drink the measured quantity, and pass the cup on. (Whence, perhaps, the saying that a man is "taken down a peg" when his spirits are suddenly lowered.)

That a pilgrimage should be a penance indicates that journeys had become more difficult than in earlier times. The roads and bridges of the Romans, though seldom, if ever, repaired, had to serve for the English. But few villages actually stood on the ancient roads, and the lanes leading to them were mere unpaved tracks. Rivers, much broader and deeper than they are now, were crossed by fords (as a host of place-names testifies), and travellers were frequently ducked, if not drowned, in them or in the marshes which were then common enough in the undrained country. Robbers infested the woods and wilds through which the ancient roads mostly ran, and there were no inns. The village alehouse was a hall or room where people could meet together and drink their own mead, or ale, or hold their public meetings. There was a legal fine for "breaking the peace" in such a place; but the traveller could not lodge there—he must sleep under the stars, unless he ventured to ask hospitality of the local thegn. Hence hospitality to poor travellers and strangers was one of the works of mercy enjoined upon bishops, clergy and monks.

The energy with which Dunstan strove to rouse the rich from sloth and self-indulgence points to another characteristic of the time. Wealth, and with it power, had increased, and the nobles had become the lords, rather than the leaders, of the people, while, after Edgar, the sovereign was no longer able to control them. Even in the days of Edred and Edgar there seems to have been a kind of understood alliance of the king, the reforming clergy, and the people in opposition to the nobility. The thegns were too powerful for the good of the country. *Commendation* provided them with retainers who might be used like troops for their private ends, and the custom, which had become rapidly the rule in England, as in Europe, of turning their *beneficia* (the lands awarded to them for military service) into hereditary property, had given them wealth at the expense of the crown and the nation.

The calamity of the murder of King Edmund had caused the crown to descend to three very young kings in turn, who died early, worn out by their labours. A second royal murder, that of Edgar's elder son, Edward, placed it on the brow of a child of ten, whose mother, though all believed her guilty of her stepson's death, controlled the government in agreement with the Mercian nobles who were opposed to Dunstan and to the reform of monasteries. In consequence, after Dunstan's death in 988, during the long reign of Ethelred II the Redeless ("without wisdom") the nation

was left without the guidance for which it had always looked to the house of Alfred.

The nobles took care to get the wealth of the Church for their own families again; the monks were driven out in many places; and when the bishoprics also were secured by the nobles, the churchmen did little to supply the royal default.

In this deplorable state the country suddenly suffered a new Danish invasion; and this time the Danes were successful.

VII

THE DANISH CONQUEROR: CNUT'S LAW

UNDER the descendants of Alfred the inhabitants of England, whether of English or Danish origin, had come to feel themselves one people, although there were always great differences between north and south in character and customs. But after Edgar's death the badness of the government opened the way for fresh invasion, first by the Danes and then by the Normans.

The Danes, though under Sweyn they perpetrated much the same deeds as in the time of Alfred, merged, under Sweyn's son Cnut, into the English race, and did not alter, except for the better, the system of English life and governance. It was to be different with the Norman Conquest.

During the ten years of Ethelred's childhood the whole organisation of the kingdom was left without attention, while the king's mother and the nobility enriched themselves and squandered their plunder on luxury or in private feuds. Even the fleet, so carefully maintained from Alfred to Edgar, was allowed to break up, as captains died and ships became unseaworthy. Dunstan was powerless, and before his death in 988 he had to witness a fresh beginning of pirate attacks.

At first the Northmen, both from Ireland and from the Scandinavian countries, ravaged the coasts. Meeting with little resistance, they in 991 made a more deliberate attack on Essex, landing at Maldon. Here the gallant alderman of Essex, Brihtnoth, faced them at the head of the fyrd of the shire, but he was unsupported, and after a stubborn fight, described in an ancient song, fell among his household troops, who fought over his body to the last. The Danes boasted of their victory and carried off rich booty; but they left that district alone for the next twelve years.

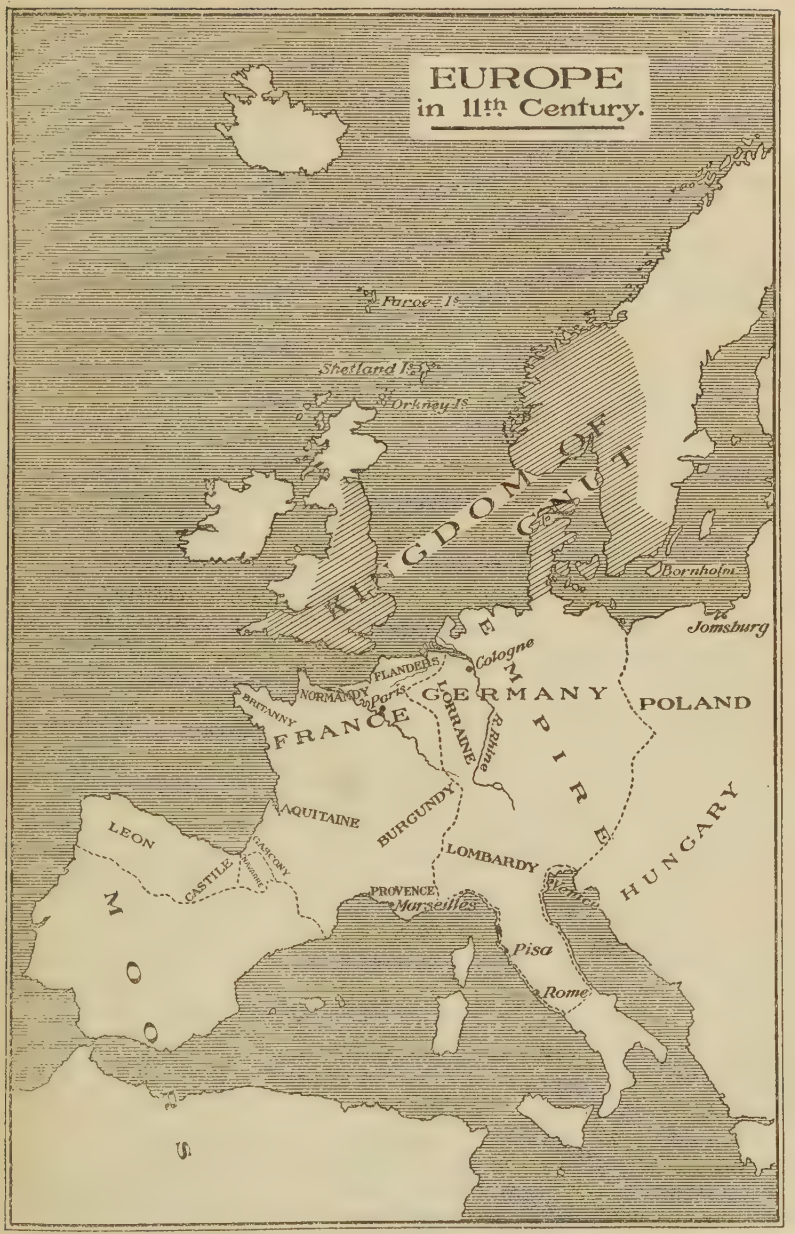
Ethelred and his Witan could think of no means of facing the Danes, and offered to pay a great ransom to them to go away. This was done again and again: every time the sum demanded was larger and the respite purchased shorter, till the people were utterly impoverished and every part of the country had been harried. "And the fyrd was often gathered against them; but as soon as they should have joined battle then was there ever, for some cause, flight determined on; and in the end they ever had the

victory." . . . "And when they dispersed to their ships then ought the fyrd to have gone out to oppose them if they should land; but the fyrd fared home. And when they were eastwards, then was the fyrd held westwards; and when they were southwards, then was our fyrd northwards. Then were all the Witan summoned to the king, and they were to counsel how this land might be defended. But although something was then resolved it did not stand even one month; at last there was no chief who would gather a fyrd, but each fled as he best might; nor at the last would even one shire help another." So does the Chronicle describe the condition of things. Leadership was lacking altogether, for Ethelred's confidence was given to a traitor alderman, Edric Streona, and his only hope was placed in foreigners. Ethelred had married, as his second wife, Emma, sister of Richard II, duke of Normandy, but he obtained no military aid, and when he allowed Emma to place the hitherto impregnable city of Exeter in the charge of one of her attendants, the Norman let the Danes in, and all the wealth and supplies stored there were lost.

The only step Ethelred planned was a massacre of some Danish troops whom (as it seems) he had taken into his pay as mercenaries in London and Oxford and some other places. One of these bands of mercenaries had actually sacked Canterbury and allowed his men to seize Archbishop Alphege (or Ælfheah). The Danes pretended that the dane-geld which Ethelred had covenanted to pay them did not cover the archbishop's ransom, and demanded a great sum from him. Alphege refused to have any such ransom gathered from his poverty-stricken flock, and in their rage the Danes pelted him to death. Ethelred took no notice of this treacherous act of brutality, but paid to the chieftain, Jarl Thorkill, the sum (48,000 pounds of silver) which he had promised.

At length Sweyn resolved to settle in England. Ethelred fled to Normandy, and every part of England in turn recognised Sweyn as king, even London, which had defended itself brilliantly, and had three times beaten off its besiegers with "more harm and evil then they had ever supposed any townsmen could do to them," says the Chronicle.

Fortunately for the country, Sweyn, a savage pagan, died next year and Ethelred two years later (1016), so that the reins of war and government were grasped by their sons, Cnut and Edmund Ironside, young men, the one nineteen, the other twenty-two, in every way superior to their fathers. Unhappily, each expected to be king, and, strangely enough, the Danelaw recognised Edmund, who had married an heiress of that district, while Wessex accepted Cnut. The year 1016 was filled with desperate fighting. Five pitched battles were fought in the year, in which Edmund proved himself a brilliant general; but in the last, at Assandun (in Essex), he was defeated, owing to the treason of Alderman Edric, who,


EUROPE
in 11th Century.
Faroe Is
Shetland Is
Orkney Is
KINGDOM OF CANUT
Bornholm
Jomsburg
EMPIRE
Cologne
FLANDERS
NORMANDY
Paris
GERMANY
POLAND
BRITANNY
FRANCE
LORRAINE
Rhine
AQUITAINE
BURGUNDY
LEON
CASTILE
GASCONY
Pyrenees
LOMBARDY
HUNGARY
PROVENCE
Marseilles
Pisa
Rome
MOORS

having deserted Ethelred for Sweyn, now joined Edmund again, as he professed, but only to betray him. After this Cnut and Edmund agreed to divide the realm, Edmund taking London with the south, west, and east, and Cnut Northumbria and the Danelaw of the Five Boroughs. But in a few weeks Edmund died, either worn out by his incessant labours or, as the people believed, murdered by Edric with Cnut's knowledge. Cnut, at any rate, professed much grief for the death of his "brother Edmund," and he won some approval by his conduct to Edric. "We must pay this man what we owe him," said he, "that is to say, he must be killed lest he deceive us again." So he was beheaded, and his body cast out unburied beyond London wall.

Cnut was now readily accepted as king of all England. He got Edmund's younger brother put to death, sent his infant sons far away to Sweden, and finally married Ethelred's widow, Emma, who was very ready to be "Lady of the English" again; but she left her young sons, Edward and Alfred, in Normandy.

Once safely king of England, Cnut ceased to act as conqueror and became one of her wisest rulers. Though he several times perpetrated cruel executions and murders of persons who seemed to be dangerous to himself, his actions only injured a few great nobles, and the people at large, to whom he gave good justice and among whom he kept order, came afterwards to look on him as a model king. He kept but a few Danes with him, except for his bodyguard, or *huscarls*, and ruled England by Englishmen.

As he was also king of Denmark, and in time became king of Norway, he maintained a great fleet, and was practically the sovereign of a maritime empire whose roadway was the North Sea. This made London a port of European importance. It was the chief meeting-place of all Cnut's subjects, where the seamen of Denmark, Norway and Frisia—now no longer pirates, but merchants and adventurers—came in their fine ships to buy English cloth and fine artistic jewelled or embroidered work, or the wares of Southern Europe, such as silk, wine and oil, and even costlier treasures of ivory, gold and spices which came from still more distant countries. Cnut kept a permanent fleet in the Thames or off Sandwich. His best war galleys were some 300 feet long, manned by at least eighty rowers, and very swift; the merchantmen were wider and deeper boats, slower, but very seaworthy, and moved by sail power, but they were not yet able to tack, so that they could only put to sea with a favourable wind. London was now the capital of England, and Cnut was the first king who dwelt there. His palace stood outside the city, where now stand the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey.

Commerce, and therefore town life, received a strong impetus from the Danish settlers, so that in the half-century between Sweyn and the Norman Conquest many small towns grew populous and wealthy. The Five Burghs have been mentioned already. Others

are Oxford, once the Mercian-Wessex frontier fortress, now the central meeting-place for north, west, and south; Bristol, which was till Ethelred's time a simple royal manor, now a busy port of trade with the Danish-Irish towns and with Scandinavia; Norwich, a village when Sweyn burnt it, re-founded by Cnut to become a mercantile centre, for it was then accessible from the sea, like Lincoln, the tide coming far up the wide rivers, which had not yet sandbars at their mouths; Durham, founded by monks who fled before a Danish incursion and found here a safe resting-place for St. Cuthbert's coffin, now made a fortress city by the Danish earl; while in especial Sandwich, and the other south-east ports, which traded with Normandy, Dover, Romney, Hythe and Hastings, became much more active, and before 1066 had become a league called the CINQUE PORTS, a name they have kept ever since.

London and the other Danish cities had a system of self-government, conducted in a public assembly of the free citizens, called the Court of Husting (whence we still speak of an election as " going to the hustings ").

Danish laws and customs were more exact than English, as was natural among a naval and commercial people; and when Cnut, in a great Witenagemot held at Oxford, pledged all his people to live by " Edgar's Law "—which was now regarded as the English ideal— and announced certain additions to it, he ordered, it is said, this code to be published to the people, that is, read aloud in public meetings of the shire and hundred and in the cathedrals and churches. From these laws and other testimony it is clear that the nation had recovered rapidly from the wars of Ethelred's time, and was developing in much the same way as continental peoples.

Distinctions, duties and rules were beginning to be more definite. Population and wealth had increased, but a great proportion of the wealth was in the possession of comparatively few individuals. Cnut distinguishes two main classes: (1) the nobility; (2) the ordinary freemen. The former are in three ranks: earls (the Danish jarls), king's thegns and ordinary thegns. The freemen comprised freeholders on their own farms, the townspeople, sailors and clergy.

The king is able to announce to his people that henceforward he will no longer claim a general vague right to supplies from all the villages; he has plenty of estates of his own, including villages and whole towns, and the reeves of each shire will arrange that the produce thence may supply him and his court. This seems to be the first recognition of a difficulty about maintaining the growing numbers of the royal household, which will crop up again and again through centuries, and will often be called " purveyance."

Again, the king takes for granted that the estates entrusted to thegns and earls are now their own property; they will not be claimed again by the king when the holder dies. On the other hand, every nobleman, or his ancestor, having at some time received his estate

from the king, does owe to him some sort of payment, in return, when (being dead) he can no longer fulfil the duties assigned to him. This payment, called a *heriot*, is levied from the estate. It consists of warlike accoutrements and money, according to the station and wealth of the dead man, ranging from the two pounds due from a small thegn to the heriot of an earl—four horses saddled and four unsaddled, four helmets, swords, and coats of mail, eight spears and shields (that is, the equipment of four horsemen, or knights, and eight foot soldiers), besides 200 mancuses of gold. A mancus was worth thirty silver pence.

Another rule of Cnut's marks the opening of a new chapter in government: "And I will that every man be entitled to his hunting in wood and in field on his own possession. And let every one forego my hunting; take notice when I will have it untrespassed on, under penalty of the full wite."

This is the first game-law, an indication that the wild game, then so important a part of the food supply, was becoming scarcer, and that hunting was also a pleasure and privilege which the great meant to preserve. For, as always in medieval grants, the right or privilege conferred on one man implied the denial of it to others. The grant to the owner of the right of hunting meant that other men must not come to follow the game on his land, nor could he go hunting except on his own land. Again, the king asserts his right to exclude people from such woods and wilds as he chooses. Under the Saxon kings no clear line between royal and public property had been drawn; the king was the guardian of public rights. Cnut makes a distinction; and when royal rights and private rights are recognised without any mention of general public interests it is likely that these will be set aside and practically cease to exist. Such, at all events, was in time the fate of the people's rights of hunting.

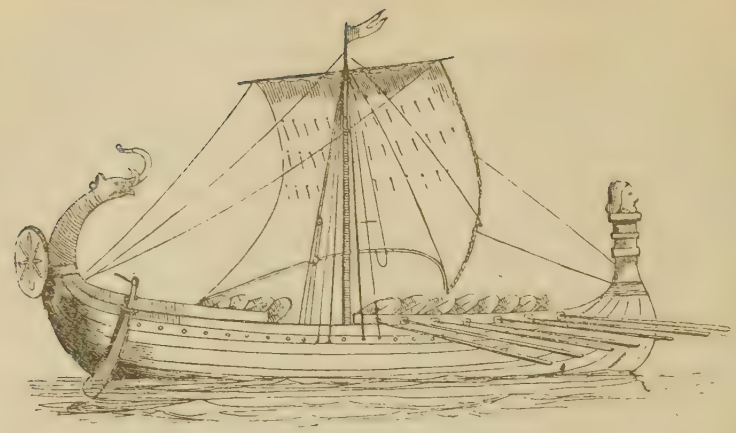
It is noticeable that there was no racial hatred between Danes and English; the Danish settlers had intermarried with the natives, and all called themselves English alike. But a great deal of Danish custom and language was adopted, and not only in the north. Men had used to speak of "Alfred's Dooms"; now they spoke of Edgar's Law. The new or rebuilt minsters are, in the Danish districts of the north, called kirks, and in the south the name church comes into use.

Cnut entrusted the management of England to earls, who were set over large districts—Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, Wessex; in fact, the ancient kingdoms—and superseded the Saxon aldermen. They had almost kingly powers, and were provided with sufficient revenue to exercise them by receiving one-third of the fines paid in the shire courts—"the earl's third penny." The country was so loyal and peaceable that Cnut was able safely to leave it and visit his Scandinavian dominions and to make a famous journey to Rome.

But there was one exception to the general prosperity of England: in the far north, always torn by feuds, the Scottish king had made such vigorous assaults that, after a great victory at Carham, he was able to annex all the country north of the Tweed; and as, since Edmund I's time, Cumberland had been left in the hands of Scottish kings, the frontier of England was now pushed considerably southward.

This Scottish conquest of Lothian did not mean that the population was wiped out. On the contrary, seeing that the people there were more civilised than the Celtic clans, the Scottish kings paid more attention to their Lothian possessions, which became in time the real core of their kingdom.

When Cnut died in 1035, the Witenagemot elected his elder son, Harold, king (1035–1040), and when he died Harthacnut, Emma's son (1040–1042); when he also died suddenly and childless, they fetched Edward, the surviving son of Ethelred, from Normandy. None of these three kings were strong rulers, but the succession was determined, and the general system of government carried on, with more or less friction, by the Witenagemot under the lead of the earls, of whom the most eminent were Siward in Northumbria, Leofric in Mercia, and Godwine in Wessex, all having been appointed by Cnut.



A Ship of the Northmen.

VIII

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AND THE NORMAN PENETRATION

The generation of King Edward "the Confessor" witnessed—without understanding it—the preparation for that catastrophe of the Norman Conquest which was shortly to fall upon their country. The penetration of foreigners, and the rivalries among those who should have been national leaders, alike undermined its security. Doubtless to the people, the quarrels of the great seemed to be of little importance to themselves, except, indeed, when the earls, instead of striking at each other personally, adopted a hideous practice of continental feudalism and pillaged the population living in the territory of their rivals. This cruel method had actually been used by Ethelred II, and it was popular with the troops retained by the nobles, because they obtained plunder. In truth, the reign of the Confessor was one of those rare epochs when the "politics" of the ruling class were of critical importance to the nation.

Edward, when he came to England to be crowned, was already an elderly man, dull, weak-minded and lazy. He had never been anything else, but he and some of those about him took his inertness to be a holy patience and a token of a religious mind. He was a devout worshipper and was generous towards monks and clergy—though to none else. But though he liked to practise, as an amateur, some of the ways of monks, he had not even the energy to fulfil a vow he had made to go on pilgrimage to Rome, but sent to beg the pope, according to the custom of those times, to absolve him from keeping his promise. This custom arose because people sometimes made vows in a fit of enthusiasm, or when they were in danger, and the Roman bishops, who now claimed

a greater authority than other prelates, assumed an authority to release men from injudicious, or even inconvenient, promises.

The pope stipulated that Edward should, instead of his pilgrimage, do some benefit to the Church by founding a monastery and church, and this was the reason of his building his famous monastery on the little eyot of the Thames, near Cnut's palace, where he turned an existing house of a few poor monks into a grand abbey to serve his new church of St. Peter, which was called the West Minster, to distinguish it from the great old minster of St. Paul in the heart of London.

Having been brought up in Normandy, with a more literary education than Englishmen had, Edward was Norman-French in habits, speech and thought, and he brought with him a following of Norman-French friends and clerks. On them he bestowed dignities whenever he could. One, Ulf, was made bishop of Dorchester, though he could not get through the service without mistakes, and " did nothing bishoplike so that it is a shame to tell of," says the Chronicle. In another, Robert, abbot of Jumièges, he put such faith " that if he said a black crow was white the king would rather trust his mouth than his own eyes." This monk he made Archbishop of Canterbury, in spite of the protests of the Witenagemot.

So long as Cnut's earls, Godwine, Leofric and Siward, still lived, the government of the land was really in their hands and things were not hopeless, though the lack of a central control encouraged rivalries among their sons and retainers.

Siward the Strong was an upright, determined man who had the full respect of his turbulent subjects, Danish, Norse or English. His daughter married Duncan, king of Scotland, who was deposed and slain by Macbeth, and Siward invaded Scotland to try to place their son, young Malcolm III, on the throne. Though he was not very successful in this matter, he kept the reputation of a first-rate soldier and general. He built, beside York, the first new monastery founded in the north since the devastations of the Danes, where now the ruins of St. Mary's stand, and there he was at last buried. Mourning that he must die, not in battle, but on his bed, " the death of a cow," the old earl bade his men at least put his armour on him, and he died in helmet and mail, grasping his shield and battle-axe, in 1055.

Leofric of Mercia, as befitted his more civilised earldom, was a man of more peaceable and intellectual gifts, a protector of monks and churches: " Very wise towards God and also towards the world, which was a blessing to this nation." He also built a new monastery, round which shortly sprang up the little town of Coventry, where an absurd legend slanders his fame, but preserves the name of his wife, the pious Godgifu (or Godiva). He was a disinterested ruler, but his son Elfgar, who succeeded him in 1057, was less so; and Elfgar's sons, Edwin and Morcar, were

mere selfish nobles of the cunning type characteristic of the century.

Godwine, a great Sussex noble, held Kent and all Wessex as his earldom. His wife was of the Danish royal family, and his wealth was enormous. He was an extremely able man, and had loyally served each king from Cnut to Edward. He strongly opposed giving bishoprics or other offices to foreigners, and therefore found himself in opposition to the king's personal wishes. Unfortunately, he was not friendly to the Church, and Stigand, whom he persuaded the king to make bishop of Winchester, was neither a saintly nor a scholarly priest, but a politician, formerly Cnut's secretary. The name of the *Goodwin* Sands, which made their appearance at this time, and are believed to have been named after the earl, preserves the Saxon pronunciation.

Edward's weakness made him the tool of those nearest him, and his marriage to Godwine's daughter, Edith, and the fondness he showed for her third brother, Tostig, seemed to ensure Godwine's power. Sweyn, the eldest son, was given the earldom of Hereford; Harold, the second, the earldom of East Anglia; and later, when Siward died, Tostig was to receive the whole of Northumbria. Godwine's sons had the fortune of England in their hands, and they flung it away.

Sweyn outraged the feelings of the king and the people; first, by carrying off the abbess of Leominster from her convent, and, next, by a peculiarly treacherous murder of his own cousin, Earl Beorn. He was outlawed and fled to Flanders, the favourite place of refuge just then, but when he reappeared with a fleet, and acted much like a pirate, the king actually pardoned him.

Suddenly (1051) a quarrel over the foreigners showed the uncertainty of Godwine's position. The king's brother-in-law, Count Eustace of Boulogne, had come to visit him, and on his return journey he provoked, by his insolence, an affray in Dover, where the townsmen beat the Normans out of the place. The king, in a sudden fury of rage, sent orders to Godwine, as earl, to go and ravage Dover in punishment. Godwine flatly refused, and mustered his troops as if to defend himself by defying the king. The other earls naturally supported the royal authority, and Godwine fled, with most of his family, on board his private fleet from Bosham to Flanders. Earl Harold, however, went to Ireland, where he collected ships and came back to ravage the western coast like any Dane. Even the queen was sent away to a dignified imprisonment in the royal convent of Wilton, while the king lavished favours on his foreign connections. Robert of Jumièges now obtained the archbishopric; the king's Norman nephew, Ralph the Timid, got the earldom of Hereford, where he offended and puzzled the men who defended the frontier by insisting that they must fight on horseback, in Norman fashion, instead of on foot, in the English way, with the natural result that the Welsh put them easily to

flight and burned Hereford. More surprising and alarming still, Edward was visited by his formidable young cousin, William, duke of Normandy; and a suspicion seems to have arisen that Archbishop Robert was persuading the king to give power in England to his cousin. Certainly he took back to Normandy, so as to keep in safe custody, the hostages which Edward had required from Godwine, and kept them in prison.

Hereupon a sudden change of feeling took place: Godwine became popular again, and as soon as he appeared with a fleet in the Thames it was clear that the king must restore him and his family at once. There was no possibility of contesting his return, for while he was in exile Edward had resolved to spare the people the heavy tax, still called danegeld, from which the expense of the royal fleet was defrayed. Legend said he had seen the devil in the treasure-chamber sitting on the bags of money. To the joy, therefore, of the people (and to that, also, of Normans and Scandinavians), all the ships and sailors had been dismissed.

The Witenagemot, which inlawed the family of Godwine, decreed, so as to be in the right with both sides, that all foreigners should be exiled except those whom the king wished to retain—an exception which would have kept them all, had not a few been so much afraid of Godwine and the people that they fled forthwith. In particular the two hated bishops, Robert and Ulf, galloped off at once, forcing a road through London by cutting down any one in their way.

Only a few months after his return the old Earl Godwine died suddenly (1053). He was soon followed by Earls Siward and Leofric, and the stage was cleared for the rivalries of the young men.

There was now a grave anxiety in men's minds about the fate of the kingdom after Edward's death, which certainly must depend upon his successor on the throne. His natural heir would be his nephew, the Etheling Edward the Exile, the sole surviving son of Edmund Ironside whom Cnut had sent to Sweden. The Swedish king had sent the boys on to a safer refuge in Hungary, where the famous King Stephen had them honourably brought up, and obtained for Edward a bride from the German royal house. Yet Edward the Confessor had never invited his exiled nephew to return home, although, being himself childless, he must have known that civil war threatened England if there were no heir to the crown. He must also have known well enough that the crown was partly in the gift of the Witenagemot, which had always proclaimed as king the most fit member of the royal family, and that it had never lain in the gift of the reigning sovereign; yet it is certain that he had actually given a vague undertaking to two princes to bequeath, or in some manner to secure, to each of them the succession to the throne. The two were Sweyn, king of Denmark, the nephew and eventual heir of Cnut, and William, duke of Normandy, Edward's cousin

once removed on the mother's side, but unconnected with the English royal stock, and without the slightest claim on the loyalty or hopes of the English.

When Godwine's earldom and his great power descended to Harold, he induced the king to send for the Etheling Edward. But it took three years (in the disturbed state of Europe) before he could reach England with his wife and their three young children, and no sooner was he on his native soil than he died (1057). It seemed unlikely that his child, Edgar, could be chosen king, if he were likely to have to contend with Sweyn or William, for it was only too certain that the great earls would not work loyally under a child; and Harold—the most powerful man in the country, an excellent general, with a large force of his own *house-carls* and with his own fleet—began to regard himself as the fittest candidate for the crown. In the last eight years of the old king's reign he acted as regent, and most of the nobles and people of the south of England came to expect his election, for Edgar Etheling, as he is always termed, was of a gentle, unworldly temper, more like his father and great-uncle than his grandfather the Ironside.

Unfortunately Harold had not conciliated the Mercian earls. He twice endeavoured to banish Elfgar, but on Elfgar's death his son Edwin succeeded him, and Edward's appointment (1055) of Tostig as earl of Northumbria had made things worse. Tostig was as brutal as his eldest brother had been. His pride and injustice infuriated the northerners, and when two of their leading thegns were murdered in his own house, and a third in the palace of the Lady Edith, his sister, they rose in sudden revolt and deposed him, and elected Edwin's brother, Morcar, earl of Northumbria. Harold could hardly fight half the kingdom, and was obliged to accept, in the king's name, the Northumbrians' choice. But he attempted to punish Morcar's father, Elfgar, and then the latter procured a viking fleet from Ireland to ravage the west coast, and, helped by the Welsh king Griffith, raided Herefordshire and burned Hereford. Harold showed his generalship in the war which followed, and established English supremacy in parts of Wales. He strengthened his own position by getting his younger brothers created earls, but Tostig was now an implacable enemy, thinking Harold to blame because he had not been restored in Northumbria.

King Edward reached the advanced age (as it then was) of sixty-two, and fell ill towards Christmas 1065, just as the West Minster was ready for consecration. At the beginning of January 1066, he died. On his death-bed he practically recognised Harold as his heir, and the next morning, as soon as the old king had been laid to rest in the West Minster, the Witenagemot elected Harold king, and he was crowned immediately. Unhappily, when Archbishop Robert fled, Godwine had got Stigand made Archbishop of Canterbury, though, of course, the see was not really vacant, and

therefore he was not recognised at Rome nor by the stricter of the English clergy, who, when nominated to bishoprics, preferred to be consecrated either by the Archbishop of York or abroad. Harold also avoided the ministrations of Stigand and was crowned by Aldred of York, a proceeding so extraordinary that some doubted whether it were lawful.

Money

Unit, silver penny *or* pound weight of silver.

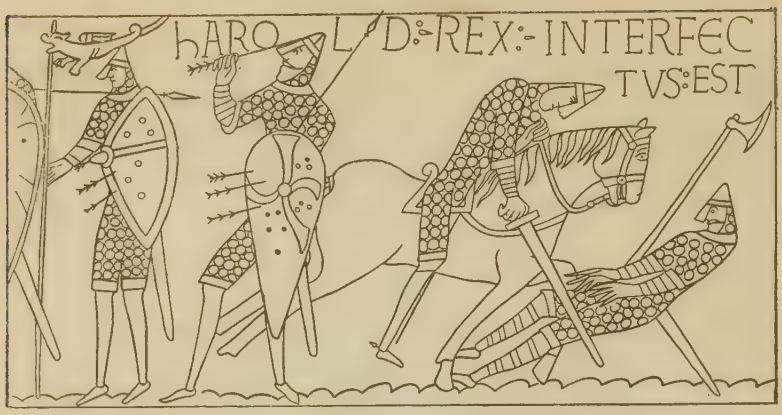
Shilling = term for 12 pennies.
Mark = ,, ,, 13*s.* 4*d.*

From Edward III—

1 silver groat = 4 pence.
1 silver noble = 6*s.* 8*d.* (½ mark).
1 gold noble = *about* 2 marks.

From Edward IV—

1 gold noble (royal) = *about* 18*s.* 4*d.*



THE DEATH OF HAROLD (BAYEUX TAPESTRY).

IX

THE NORMAN CONQUEST, 1066

As soon as he received the news of Edward's death, William took up the attitude of being the king's heir, and proceeded to mobilise all his forces. Of any right in the nation, as voiced by the Witan, to choose its king he appeared to know nothing. He asserted that Edward had bequeathed the kingdom to him, and that Harold was a perjurer who had once sworn to help William to secure England, and then had broken his oath and "usurped" the crown himself. He had drawn up a careful statement of his own claim and of Harold's perfidy, and he now sent copies to the principal courts and castles, and especially to Rome, where he drew the pope's attention to the improper position of Archbishop Stigand, occupying the see of Canterbury during the lifetime of Robert, and keeping his see of Winchester as well.

The English Church was in many ways more independent of Rome than was the case on the continent, and the duke of Normandy undertook to bring it into a closer conformity with the Roman pattern.

Hereupon Alexander II declared the attack on England to be a holy war, and sent his blessing and a sacred banner to the invaders. The influence of the churchmen in every court was also directed to be used on behalf of William. A succession of upright and able popes had raised the influence of the papacy, at this time, to a great height, and its support was extremely valuable to William.

Perhaps the difference between continental and English feeling is well illustrated by the question of Harold's oath. At some time in Edward's reign Harold, while cruising at sea, had been wrecked by a storm on the French coast. According to the barbarous custom of the age he and his men were taken prisoners, and William

got possession of him. Harold was treated as a hostage and not allowed to go home until he had made some promise of supporting William's claim to the Crown. This promise William compelled him to take over a chest containing the relics of saints so that (as men believed) those saints would be personally angry if the oath were broken.

When Harold reached England, it did not seem to him or to the Witan that such a promise, extorted by force as the alternative to perpetual imprisonment, could be binding, especially as it could not bind the Witenagemot and the nation; but to the French or Italians it would seem that the only right way of disregarding it would be to send to the pope to ask him for absolution from the vow. As Harold had not done this, he might be regarded as a perjurer by the Normans and the Pope.

Harold, on his part, spent the early months of the year 1066 preparing for the coming struggle : fitting out ships, coining money, using practical means to keep order, and visiting different parts of the realm, especially York, which was threatened by Tostig, who hated his brother and cared nothing about England.

By May Harold had a large force guarding the coasts of Kent and Sussex, and a fine fleet cruising in the Channel. And so they kept watch four months. But the northerly winds which kept William's flotilla in harbour were really his greatest good fortune, for they wafted the fleet of Tostig's Norwegian ally, the adventurous King Harald Hardrada, who brought 300 ships up the Humber in hope of conquering England before William could.

The Mercian and Northumbrian earls, Edwin and Morcar, who had already beaten Tostig once, marched to face the Norwegians, but were heavily defeated outside York at Fulford, and Harald and Tostig triumphantly entered the city, where the citizens and the whole Northumbrian earldom had to negotiate a surrender.

By this time the sailors of Harold's fleet in the Channel had come to the end of their endurance. Their provisions were finished and their ships getting unseaworthy. The king had just sent them round to London to refit when he heard of the Norwegian victory. Leading his troops north as fast as possible, he entered York on September 25, to the joy of the citizens, and at the battle of "Stamford Bridge," probably on the Ouse beyond York, defeated and slew both Harald Hardrada and Tostig with nearly all their host. Only twenty-four ships got away to Norway.

But on September 28 William had brought his fleet of near 700 boats safely across the Channel and landed in Pevensey Bay. He may have had perhaps twelve to fourteen thousand men, all well armed, trained soldiers, some of whom had horses. After landing unopposed, since Harold's fleet was still in the Thames, William secured his ships and encamped at Hastings, whence he raided the country round, not venturing inland until Harold should have sought him out and waged battle.

Harold with his mounted troops covered the distance from York to London in four days, and waited as long there for more troops to join him, but finding that Edwin and Morcar, who had to collect the fresh levies of Yorkshire and Mercia, were not hurrying, he finally marched out of London with only his own men and the fyrds of the neighbouring shires. His brother Gyrth wisely urged him not to hurry on the battle but to lay waste the Sussex country, so as to starve William's army, and wait for the reinforcements. But Harold refused to devastate his own homeland, and sought battle as quickly as possible.

He emerged from the old Roman road through the Weald forest rather suddenly near Hastings, and took up a strong position on the abrupt little hill of Senlac, where now the village of Battle stands, so that the steep sides of the hill on either hand might prevent the Norman mounted knights from riding down his infantry, while the trees would protect his rear. Probably he had at least as many men as William, but only his own troops and the garrisons of London and the Kentish burghs were trained soldiers and completely armed; the fyrd of the shires had been neglected throughout Edward's long reign, and now were badly equipped and undisciplined. William had an ordered force of cavalry, bowmen and infantry, but the English (being without the troops from the Danelaw) had hardly any bowmen, and their more clumsy missiles—javelins, darts and stones—did not, of course, carry far. Harold drew up the picked troops—his own guard, and the garrisons from London and the burghs of Kent—in front and round his own standards of the Fighting Man and the royal Dragon of Wessex, their long, pointed shields making a kind of fence over which their spears showed like a bristling hedge. He ordered the whole body to stand firm to the last and compel the enemy to attack.

As the first flights of Norman arrows did not produce any great results, the English catching or turning them on their shields, some of the mounted men, led by a gallant minstrel, Taillefer (Hew-Iron) rode up the steep bank and tried to break in. But Taillefer was quickly slain and the rest recoiled. Some of them got bogged, and seeing this a number of the country fyrd soldiers broke Harold's orders and dashed from their posts to slay the encumbered horsemen. A slaughter of both sides resulted in this *malfosse* (cursed ditch), and William himself lost his horse, so that a cry rose that he was slain, until he pulled off his helmet and showed himself as boldly as he could. But the incident taught the duke how to entice the English defenders from their position. He directed the rest of his knights to appear to repeat the same charge—to ride to the attack, then to turn and ride away in a pretended flight. Once more the fyrd broke from its ranks, crying out that the victory was won, and pursued the retreating Normans till, having reached level ground, the horsemen wheeled and began to cut them down. In the meantime the archers, at William's command, were shooting

very high so that the bolts fell on the heads of the English, who either had to lift up their shields, to cover their faces, or to risk the arrows while striking at the Normans, who were now breaking into the gaps in the ranks. Many, therefore, were shot down, and among them was Harold. His brothers Gyrth and Leofwine fell also, but Harold's *house-carls* fought on desperately, selling their lives dearly as they were cut down one by one.

The battle lasted till far into the evening, and until the English army was utterly broken. Only a few of the shire levies, including the sheriff of Middlesex, escaped to carry word to London of the calamity.

But that this battle was decisive was not at first understood, especially as William moved towards London gradually, placing garrisons in Dover and Canterbury, and then fell ill, and for a month was confined to a sick bed. The Witenagemot, therefore, elected Edgar Etheling king, but Edwin and Morcar, who had by this time reached London, retired at once to their earldoms, evidently calculating on both claimants, William and Edgar, sending to bargain for their support. Their troops were almost the only trained soldiers left, and without them no resistance to William was possible, perhaps not even with them.

The invaders were, therefore, left undisturbed in Kent till William recovered from his illness and began an encircling march, so as to prove to the Londoners that they were isolated. On reaching the Thames he turned westwards along the southern banks as far as Wallingford. Crossing the river there, he marched back along the north bank, and all along his route he laid the country waste. By the time he had reached Little Berkhampstead the lesson had been learned. Edgar, with the Archbishop of York and a few other bishops and leading men, went to the camp and made submission for themselves and the city. As soon as safe arrangements could be made the duke took possession, and on Christmas Day he was crowned in the West Minster of Edward by the Archbishop of York. The citizens were now ready to accept the new king, much as they had accepted Cnut, and they probably hoped for as good results. But at the climax of the coronation ceremony those within the minster raised the traditional shout of greeting, and the crowd of suspicious soldiers outside, imagining that some assault was being made, flew to set fire to the village beside the abbey—their favourite treatment—the people rushed from the church in panic, and tumult and slaughter raged among the unarmed crowd, till the archbishop had hurriedly finished the service and William could call off his men.

The new sovereign knew well enough that the surrender of London and the south-east, and even his coronation, might not make him recognised by the other parts of the kingdom, but he would not venture further inland till the places already taken were fortified and garrisoned. While this work was pressed on, Edwin and Morcar

came to submit, and found that they must stay at the new king's court, like Edgar, treated honourably, but watched; and when William hurried to Normandy for a brief visit he took them all with him.

From the submission of London and the great earls, it is evident that most Englishmen saw no reason to suppose that their own way of life would be seriously affected by the change in the succession. Harold, no doubt, stood for an independent and English England, but for the supremacy of his own family also. Even if the Londoners and the men of Kent understood that the two went together, to men of other districts the struggle appeared to be chiefly for a personal and local end. Godwine and his sons had ousted the heirs of the ancient royal family, and if no one could feel any strong loyalty to the feeble grandson of Edmund Ironside, many would feel some prejudice in the strife of Godwine's sons with Leofric's grandsons, the south against the north.

Therefore, though personally Harold was doubtless preferable to the Norman duke, men might reasonably doubt whether his reign would not, in any case, mean a civil war, and whether it were worth while to sacrifice everything for him.

If William could have controlled the army which won the battle of Hastings for him, and could, like Cnut, have sent them all away and ruled England by Englishmen, he would certainly have been accepted as frankly as was Cnut. But this he could not do. He had induced his followers to come on the adventure by promising them the spoils, and he was too conscious of being alien from his new subjects to trust them. He expected resistance and prepared for it, and when he hurried off to Normandy, leaving behind him insolent and brutal warriors to hold England down, he got it.

Kent broke into rebellion against the cruelty of Bishop Odo, and Exeter, where Harold's mother and his young sons had taken refuge, attempted to assert its independence. The citizens sent word that though they would pay to the new king all their accustomed dues, they would not swear obedience or admit his soldiers. "It is not my custom to take subjects on such terms," replied William. In the north, also, where William had authorised a native thegn to act as earl, the people suddenly rose, killed the titular earl and proclaimed Edgar at York. Edgar had escaped from court, and with Edwin and Morcar was stirring up Mercia to fight. But it did not occur to the leaders in the different districts to combine together; as in the days of Ethelred, no shire would help other.

In consequence, William, on his return, could take each rising in turn. As his army, more powerful than any troops the English had ever seen, drew westwards, burning the thickly-studded little towns of Dorset as it went, resistance died away. Exeter hastened to surrender. It was granted tolerable terms, to which it remained steadily faithful, and Harold's family fled abroad.

Next, William moved deliberately northwards. Oxford, the key of the midlands, was nearly destroyed; Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham and York in turn surrendered, and in all the citizens were compelled at once to toil at erecting a new fort, that the garrison the Conqueror left behind might hold the town at its mercy. At York two forts were made.

These first "castles" must have been of simple construction, and sometimes old fortifications may have been utilised, but in a few years' time they consisted of huge mounds on the tops of which rose stout wooden walls, which might be covered, when need arose, by hides drenched in water to prevent firing. Towards the end of the century stone keeps were rising in the most important places. They were all built by forced labour.

As William marched northwards Edgar with his sister Margaret fled to Scotland, where King Malcolm received them kindly and made Margaret his queen. Edwin and Morcar, as usual, submitted; and William, finding York tranquil, returned southward, leaving, as he went, garrisons in new forts to hold the north road, at Lincoln, Stamford, Huntingdon and Cambridge.

Still the people of the districts which had not yet seen William's army or had to build his forts were unsubdued in spirit, especially in the north. Old Northumbria now formed three distinct districts: (1) Yorkshire, including the country later called Lancashire; (2) the land of St. Cuthbert, or bishopric of Durham, between the Tees and Tyne, and (3) old Bernicia, or Northumberland. William sent a Norman soldier, as earl, to Durham, whose ravages drove the people to fury. They suddenly set upon the town, early in 1069, burned the bishop's house with the earl within, and massacred his troops. In the summer arrived at last the tardy fleet of Sweyn of Denmark, bringing an army of desperadoes from all the coasts round the Baltic. Unable to land in Kent or East Anglia, where William's garrisons and the people drove them off, they came northward and entered the Humber. At such an opportunity the people flew to arms, and a popular young nobleman, Waltheof, the son of Earl Siward, took the lead. The forts of York were stormed and the English sang songs of Waltheof, single-handed, keeping the gate and hewing down the Frenchmen with his two-handed axe, a corpse for every stroke.

The tale flew over England, and not only in the neighbouring shires of Stafford, Derby and Chester, but in the south-west also, the people massed together in peasant armies, thinking to destroy the castles and drive out the foreigners.

William made straight for York. The Danish fleet evaded him by shifting about the Humber, but next year he bribed the Danish leaders to go away home with all the booty they had seized. In the meantime he had reached and taken the city in spite of a desperate resistance. York had already been mostly burned down in Waltheof's fight with the garrison. The new cathedral had been

laid in ashes, after the Danes had plundered it, and Archbishop Aldred had died of grief.

In the continental fashion, William pardoned Waltheof, the noble leader, and married him to his niece, to keep a watch over him. But he punished the entire population with a cruelty unseen before in England even in Danish invasions. He systematically destroyed the houses, the cattle, cornlands and orchards, the churches, mills and villages. It took two months to slaughter and burn from the Ouse to the Tees as completely as William wished. If any inhabitants escaped to the wilder dales and moors they would probably die of starvation. Fugitives brought the horrible tidings to the "land of St. Cuthbert," and the people fled as far as they might before the army reached them. But their empty towns and villages were destroyed, and the evil work was carried across the moorlands into the west. Twenty years later, in Amounderness, the remote district between the Lune and the Ribble, there were only sixteen villages with any inhabitants. The sites and fields of forty-six others still lay desert.

Coming southwards again, William wrought the same destruction in Derbyshire, then in Staffordshire. His troops almost mutinied under the winter storms of the Peak country, but William drove them on to the fertile Cheshire plains and carried fire and sword to the walls of Chester, which was half destroyed. Such of the wretched inhabitants as escaped fled southwards. In Gloucestershire abbeys the horror-stricken monks beheld the fugitives dying of starvation at their gates.

This *harrying of the north* secured William on the throne. He had conquered his kingdom by destroying half of it. The desperate band which held out in the Isle of Ely under the famous Hereward "the Wake," and set the Danes to sack the treasures of "Goldenborough," or Peterborough abbey, rather than see it under a Norman abbot, could be reduced at leisure. They held out till 1071, but Earl Morcar joined them, and treachery came with him. William's troops broke into the Camp of Refuge, and the last free Englishmen were slain, or fled. Morcar was imprisoned; Edwin had already been killed by his own followers; the harmless Edgar Atheling submitted and was allowed to live unmolested in Hertfordshire, and even came to court, where he became the close friend of the Conqueror's eldest son, the vehement Robert. Those Englishmen who would not submit went into exile, some to Flanders, some to seek fortune in foreign wars. A large body of these made their way to Constantinople, and there for two centuries their descendants formed a valued corps in the Emperor's bodyguard.

X

THE NORMANS AND THEIR FEUDALISM

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR was one of the most remarkable men in an age of remarkable men. "A very wise man and very powerful, and more worshipful and stronger than any of his predecessors were," so the chronicler, who had seen him in his court, describes him. "He was mild to the good men who loved God, and over all measure stern to the men who gainsaid his will." His father, Duke Robert the Magnificent, otherwise called Robert the Devil, had died when William was a boy, and he had been very early obliged to rely only on himself and to struggle against envious rivals, rebellious vassals, and his own suzerain, the king of France, and he had mastered them all.

During the century and a half which had passed since Rolf's settlement in Normandy, the descendants of his Scandinavian soldiers had adapted themselves to the ways of the French neighbours and thought and spoke of themselves as Frenchmen. They were in the van of such progress as was now beginning in agriculture and commerce, and were great patrons of the reformed monasteries which were setting a higher standard of morals. Bec, Caen, Fécamp, Jumièges, became famous, though their most eminent men were not Normans.

The eleventh century had already seen a great outburst of intellectual life in the episcopal and other schools of France and Italy. A famous Italian scholar, Lanfranc of Pavia, was led, by a misfortune, to embrace the religious life in the poorest Norman monastery he could find—Bec, and there his talent for teaching was turned to the profit of the House, which set up a school in the town and made Lanfranc master. Such a school was almost like a modern college, and the fame of Lanfranc attracted students from far, and made the fortune of Bec, which became a nursery of bishops and abbots.

William himself was a supporter of the Roman system in the Church—the disciplined, learned system, which was practically the only system with which Normandy was acquainted—and Lanfranc became his principal counsellor in affairs of both Church and State.

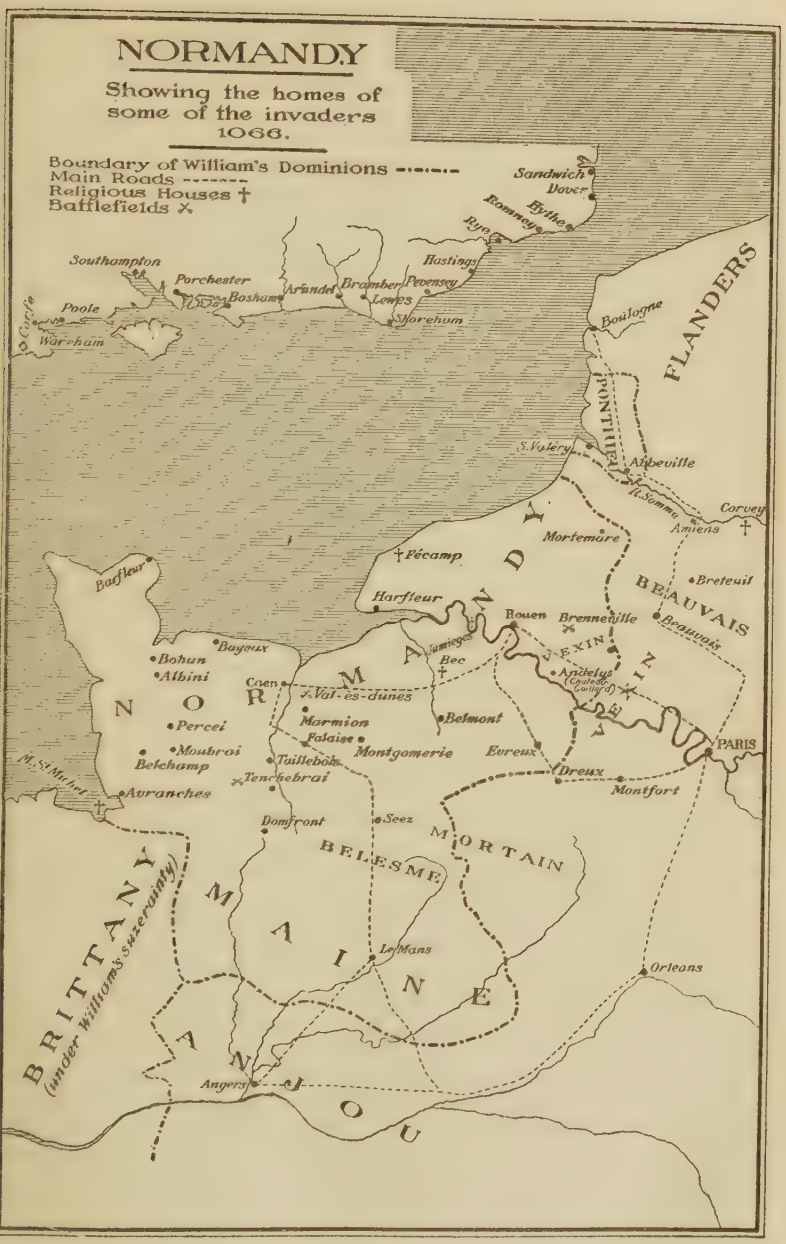
It was William's intention to be more powerful as king in England than he could well be as duke in Normandy. There, as in the rest of western Europe, the whole system of life and government was feudal, and feudalism left as little of authority to the sovereign

as it did of liberty to common men. Feudalism had developed out of the necessity of providing strong enough military forces to beat off pirates and barbarians. The ownership of land depended upon this, and the custom of *commendation* had long since, in England as elsewhere, separated the agricultural population from the professional soldier. But the term *feudal* had not been used in England before the Conquest, nor had the worst features of the system developed. On the continent the whole of the land was in the possession of military nobles, who were not, in theory, regarded as absolutely owning their territory, but were said to *hold* it, as a *fief*, from a greater lord—the count or duke of the province, who again *held* from the sovereign, and all on the same condition of coming with troops to fight for the overlord, from whom the land was held, when called upon. The troops were maintained by each holder of a fief, and cost the king nothing.

But it had early come about that the sovereigns were compelled to encourage or reward their military tenants by giving also into their hands all sorts of privileges and powers (of justice, taxation, coining money, etc.) which they exercised over the inhabitants of their fiefs, and this resulted in making them practically little sovereigns in their own dominions, whether large or small. The baron was the master of all woods and waste lands, lakes and rivers. All the game and fish and water-mills were his. He could fine or punish his tenants—his *men*—in his own law-courts. If his fief bordered the sea a wrecked ship became his prize and wrecked sailors his prisoners or slaves. No man might grind his own corn at home, but must carry it to the lord's mill and pay a fee for the grinding. The inhabitants of the villages on the fief had no rights of property or commerce unless the lord chose to bestow such privileges upon them. Only such remnants of freedom and such rights in the land were left to the population as were necessary to induce them to till the soil. The old Latin name for the country-dweller, *villanus*, shortened to *villein*, had actually come to mean on the continent a man who was unfree, and now this term was brought into England. In the same way did the English name for the free man, *ceorl*, came to mean, first a peasant, and then a *churl*.

The villein in France was "tied to the soil"; he might not go away from the fields he had to cultivate; he might not teach his children a trade, nor, when they grew up, let them marry, unless he could buy his lord's permission. Nor could a villein's son become a priest or a monk. He did not even possess in certainty his poor bits of property, his beasts, his clothes, his utensils, for on his death his lord had a claim on them, though he was usually content with taking only a part, the best beast or chattel.

On the other hand, the lord was expected to defend his villeins against other people, and many lords for their own sake would do so. But if the lord was too brutal, or too powerless, there was no one else to help them.


NORMANDY
Showing the homes of some of the invaders 1066.
Boundary of William's Dominions
Main Roads
Religious Houses †
Battlefields ⚔
Sandwich
Dover
Romney
Rye
Hythe
Hastings
Pevensey
Lewes
Arundel
Bramber
Bosham
Porchester
Southampton
Poole
Wareham
Shoreham
FLANDERS
Boulogne
PONTHIEU
S. Valery
Abbeville
Somme
Corvey
Amiens
Mortemare
Pécamp
Harfleur
Bosfleur
Bayeux
Bohun
Albini
Coen
Val-es-dunes
Percei
Moubrai
Belchamp
Tailleboi
Tenchebrai
Auranches
M. St Michel
Domfront
Seez
Marmion
Falaise
Montgomerie
Belmont
Bec
Jumieges
Rouen
Brenneville
Beauvais
Breteuil
BEAUVAIS
VEXIN
Ancheise
Evreux
Dreux
Montfort
PARIS
Orleans
LeMans
BELESME
MORTAIN
MAINE
BRITTANY
(under William's suzerainty)
ANJOU
Angers

This condition of *serfdom, villenage*, or semi-slavery, was not nearly so common in England, where men who had commended themselves to a lord might nevertheless be personally free. If the lord had rights of justice (*sake and soke*) over them it did not, in England, follow that he could subject them to his authority in all things, and unfree boys sat on the school bench beside free boys. The unfree were entitled to just judgment in the courts. Nor had the land as a whole been parcelled out amongst military chiefs, though the larger owners and the king's thegns were, of course, bound to be soldiers and to maintain troops, and the earls possessed over all the men of their earldoms a general authority, which was of a feudal nature. But the average English thegn was a small landowner linked by many social ties with still smaller freemen, nor was there any fixed distinction between military and non-military men, such as, on the continent, formed hard caste barriers. Again, the universal overlordship of the king in England covered wide public rights. The king's forests had by no means all been treated as private royal hunting-grounds; the population of the district had rights in them, and many royal rights were so seldom exercised that they could not have been very burdensome.

In the same way the very numerous little towns, many of which had owed their creation to the military insight of the House of Alfred, were all free towns, full of free men. Their inhabitants were soldier-traders or soldier-farmers, and no one but the king had any right to interfere with them. The habit of regarding the king as the personification of public right and the guardian of public freedom and property is well instanced in the ancient custom of proclaiming "the king's peace" in palaces, towns, or in other places which might be, at some special time, considered to be under his special protection. People who there behaved violently were said to have "broken the king's peace," and have committed a crime against the sovereign personally. As soon as orderliness came to be expected on the principal roads, these became "the king's highways," and any one robbing or murdering there was doubly punished.

When William became king he took pains to find out all the powers and rights he could claim as the heir of Edward the Confessor and all the kings before him. Naturally he interpreted everything to his own advantage, but this was not always to the disadvantage of the conquered. His most thorough act of conquest, the confiscation of lands, was perpetrated on the score of his right as Edward's heir. The House of Godwine, and all who had fought for Harold, and even all who had acknowledged him as king, were to be regarded as rebels against their true king, and—in feudal fashion—must forfeit their lands. This meant that every landowner in England stood to lose his land, whether an earldom or a plot of a few acres. In practice, William secured his end by confiscating the estates of the larger owners and making all the rest purchase forgiveness by great sums of money. Usually the

English owner was only allowed to keep a small portion of his estate; the rest William took, to grant it out to his followers, who had to be rewarded for their services at Hastings. In twenty years' time scarcely one per cent. of the principal landholders were Englishmen.

But, on the other hand, the new French lords of the lands found that the king recognised certain customs of the island which prevented them from enjoying as much independence as they had expected. He kept up the shire-courts in every shire (also termed counties) and in them the king's officer, the sheriff (shire-reeve), presided, and the barons found themselves among the English freemen. Nor would the king parcel out the whole kingdom in earldoms, but only established them where fighting might be expected—Chester, Kent, Shrewsbury, Hereford, Norfolk, and also in Durham—where the bishop was the earl. Elsewhere even the greatest lords usually held fiefs, not in a block, but scattered over the country; they could not easily become tyrants of a large district or gather an army. Again, he emphasised the duty which all men owed to the king, even if they held from a feudal lord. Later, at a great open-air court on Salisbury Plain (1086), he is said to have made numbers of the land-holders swear personal obedience to himself "whosesoever men they were." He did not intend to oppress the people, but the measures he took to secure himself and his French soldiers could not but be harsh, and the rest of the century was one of unrelieved gloom for the unhappy English.

An example of his skilful use of justice to strengthen the royal power is the invention of "Presentment of Englishry" in order to prevent the murder of Normans. When a dead body was found (a very frequent discovery till the thirteenth century), if the neighbours could prove the dead man to be of pure English descent, they might use the English law of fine and outlawry, or call it accident; but if they could not, the dead man was assumed to be a Norman, and to have been *murdered*, and then the Hundred had to pay a great fine unless the murderer was caught. This filled the royal coffers and also made human life more sacred.

Two of William's innovations appeared to the English to be extremely oppressive: first, his levy of the great tax called Geld or Danegeld: this had first been imposed by Ethelred II to buy off the Danes, and was afterwards levied at intervals to pay for the fleet, till the Confessor abolished tax and fleet together. It had been collected from all men according to their land, at two shillings a hide, and had always been a severe burden and only occasionally levied. But William collected it several times and once (1084) had it paid at treble the rate, six shillings the hide. In the impoverished state of the country this levy was so crushing that many were driven to sell their land—the only living of their family—or to sell their children into slavery, to pay the royal tax-gatherers.

Secondly, he took for his personal property the old royal forests (a

term which signified not only woods but moors and mountains), and he included with the "forest" large belts of open country round, in all of which he decreed that the harsh rules of Norman game-preserving must be kept by all the population. Previously the forests, though the king had special hunting rights in them, had been at least partly open to all and had furnished food and fuel plentifully. There were many such forests, but the best known of William's hunting-forests is the New Forest. What precise acts of cruelty were done there has not come down to us, but many villages were swept away, the people were especially shocked, and the mysterious deaths, first, of William's second son, Richard, and later, of Rufus, in that forest were regarded as a divine judgment. All wild beasts were declared by William to be royal property, and the inhabitants of the forest district might not touch them, even to hinder them from ruining their crops. The king "loved the big game as if he were their father," said the chronicler. The exaction of heavy fines, and the mutilations of men and dogs who were accused of trespass roused, perhaps, more hatred than the severities of the conquest.

Nevertheless, the worst oppressor of the English was not the king, but the feudal lord who had dispossessed the native thegn. The king regarded his barons as simply taking the place of the English thegn. They must pay or do whatever he had been bound to pay or do, they should receive whatever he had been entitled to receive. But naturally the foreigners interpreted their rights according to the continental system, which they knew. The king distributed the lands to his French or Flemish or Breton soldiers on the accustomed feudal terms; each must bring so many knights to the royal army when called on. This was *tenure by knight-service*, and the number of knights now fixed by William remained permanently the lawful contingent of that particular fief. They varied greatly. The abbot of Peterborough, perhaps in memory of the rising in the fen country, had to provide sixty, the abbot of St. Albans only six. The earl or great baron knew also that he would have to pay to his sovereign certain dues—when the prince was knighted or the princess married, or towards his ransom if he should be a prisoner, and these same dues he claimed from his own feudal tenants. He knew, also, that on the death of a fief-holder the heir must pay a heavy sum, called the *relief*, on succeeding to the property, that the king, or the feudal suzerain, would have to give his consent before the heir might be married, and would be the guardian of the heir should he be left fatherless while a child, which meant that the king—or the overlord, as the case might be—got all the revenues himself; that the king would dispose of the hand of any ward of his, and that heiresses, whether daughters or widows, were always the king's wards. These feudal customs provided the bulk of the revenue of the sovereign and the great lords, and were due from all who held their land feudally. Those who held from the king himself were called tenants-in-chief. But each tenant-in-chief

had a number of military tenants who held fiefs from him, and he had exactly the same rights over them. If they, too, had sub-tenants, they, too, exercised all these rights in their turn. But the lord at the bottom of the list (the *mesne lord*), who had under him no feudal tenants holding by military service, but only the ordinary farming people, expected to get from them a different kind of service, and even the greatest lords kept in their own hands some of their estates over which they were the mesne lords. These personal estates they termed *manors*. Whether or not the king assumed that the manor lords would do as the thegns had done, it was speedily clear to the people that the manorial powers and rights of their new lords were much more burdensome than of old.

The lord took for himself not only the private estate of the thegn, which he called his *demesne*, but a large share of the common lands and waste and wood. He set up a water-mill, and probably a bake-house, and compelled the peasantry to bring their corn thither and pay him toll for the grinding and baking. If they had any hand-mills (querns) of their own they must be broken, or punishment would follow. The peasants must do the work on their master's demesne with their own oxen; they must gather their flocks into his fold, that he might have all the manure; they must do his carting, road-making and building, and for the exercise of every personal liberty such as for sending a boy to school or marrying a daughter, a fee must be paid to the lord. At the same time old rights of hunting and fishing were denied, and it must have been impossible to earn any money wherewith to buy privileges, at all events under the Conqueror and Rufus.

In each manor there was the manor house, or *Hall*, where the master lived, and in which he held constantly a little law-court where the doings of the people were investigated and fines imposed. This court soon replaced the old hundred court. But the lord was the judge over his own tenants, and he pocketed their fines, and thus there was no one to protect the people from the lord and his bailiff. This daily oppression, even more than the occasional royal burdens, quickly beat down the prosperous farming people of England into miserable and unfree *villeins* for several generations.

What the condition of England was twenty years after the battle of Hastings, is known to us from the wonderful survey which William ordered to be taken of the whole of his kingdom, still called by its English name of Domesday Book.

He sent commissioners into every shire to find out:—"How many hundred hides were in that shire, or what the king had himself of land or cattle—what rights he ought to have in the twelvemonth from that shire. Also how much his bishops and his abbots and his earls had, and what or how much each man had that was land-sitting in England, in land or cattle, and how much it was worth. So very narrowly did he let them speir it out that there was not a hide nor a yardland nor—it is shameful to tell, though he thought

it no shame to do—so much as an ox or a cow or a swine was left, that was not set down in his writ; and all these writs were brought to him afterwards."

The great survey was compiled on the plan, familiar abroad, of *Inquest*, or inquiry. The commissioners had the shire-court summoned, and there they interviewed a number of representatives for each town or hundred; usually the priest and the reeve (or bailiff) and six villeins came from each village. They had to swear (jurare) to tell truth and were therefore called *jurors*. The commissioners asked them a series of questions about the extent and value of the land, its woods, meadows, fisheries and mills; how many plough-teams of oxen there were, and how many inhabitants, whether free, or villeins, or " cottars " (a class of very poor folk with little or no land, who were casual labourers). They were asked how much money it had been worth (in annual value) in the time of King Edward, and " how much now," and " if more can be got from it than is got."

The replies were written down and taken to Winchester, where they were copied out in two great volumes which form the Domesday Book, and remained for centuries the basis of government calculations.

To the English it seemed that this huge Survey was the climax of royal tyranny. But it proved subsequently to be quite as much a check upon the barons' claims. No sovereign could wish to have independent barons. The Conqueror, indeed, fulfilled his promises to his soldiers; they were given English lands; some had two or three hundred manors, and when many such manors lay together the district was termed an *Honour* (*e. g.* Richmond, Arundel, Pontefract) and had special privileges; for the most part their manors were scattered.

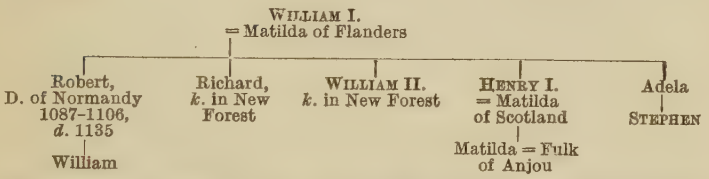
But from the first years of the conquest William and every successive king, with the sole exception of Stephen, steadily worked to reduce the power and estates of the great lords. The rebellions and the private wars with each other in which they rejoiced led directly to the same result, by causing forfeitures of estates and killing off the nobles in battle. Of forty great tenants-in-chief, named in Domesday, a dozen families were extinct before 1200, and most of the rest continued into the thirteenth century only through the marriage of heiresses into newer families. Only two families (Mortimer and Vere) survived the fourteenth century, and in the eighteenth century only one peer represented a direct Norman ancestor. It is therefore wholly incorrect to suppose that the House of Lords, whether under Henry VIII or George V, represents the Norman soldiers of William the Conqueror.

XI

CHURCH AND STATE UNDER THE NORMAN KINGS

(i) The State

William I.	Dec. 1066–July 1087
William II.	Sept. 1087–Aug. 1100
Henry I.	Aug. 1100–Dec. 1135
Stephen	Dec. 1135–Oct. 1154



During the reigns of the first three Norman kings, William I and his sons, William II and Henry I, a vigorous organising of the resources of England began. A gift for organisation was perhaps the most remarkable of the many talents of the Norman race; and the catastrophe of the conquest had proved that unless the English reached the level of other nations in this respect, they could not protect themselves from their enemies.

But the Norman organising meant, in the first place, setting aside many personal or local liberties; and, in the second, drawing distinctions between different classes of men and different aspects of life, which had not hitherto been regarded as separate.

As to the first, the conquest had reduced the mass of the nation to an unfree condition, and so made an end of the countless layers of Saxon social classes with their varying rights and customs. It was the "liberties," claimed by the Norman barons, that an order-loving king would now find in his way.

As to the second point, the new kings could hardly regard themselves, like the old kings, as the natural leaders of their great family, the nation. They rather regarded their kingdom as their property, their house in which they meant to be masters, and thus the *State* became at once something distinct from the people and possibly even opposed to it. The king's Council, the king's financial and judicial system were his personally, and might be engines of tyranny to the people.

In the organisation of the State three changes become at once noticeable—

i. A system of government by ministers and departments, dividing various functions among themselves.
ii. A distinction made between the Church and the State, and between the Church and the people.
iii. A distinction between Town and Country, and a quick development of the former.

The System of Government.—The stricter methods by which the land was now governed exercised a direct effect upon the lives and habits of the population. The new kings aimed at securing as much revenue and as many troops as was possible without exhausting the kingdom. The system employed for this object also preserved order, by making disorder dangerous and unprofitable. The Norman sovereigns used a threefold machinery: (A) the offices and departments of the King's Court; (B) the Great Council; (C) the local courts of shire and hundred.

A.—The *King's Court* was a term of complex meaning, and its departments and offices were much more exactly organised than under the Saxon kings. The *Court*, in the general sense, included, of course, all persons whom the sovereign usually kept about him; a few trusty friends, whose advice he might ask, personal servants, knights and barons of his bodyguard, officials of great or small importance, clerks of all ranks. Some were clergy, more were laymen. In this general sense the court included also the queen's following of ladies, clergy and servants, and the tutors and attendants of the royal children. Some there were whose business it was to amuse the king and queen—huntsmen, minstrels, jesters and the like. But the important part was composed of the persons who kept going the practical business of controlling the kingdom, the men who, all together, would properly be named the *Curia Regis*, or King's Court, in the narrow sense. In rank they might range from bishop to sub-deacon, from earl to man-at-arms, but each was a man of ability who took the monarch's instructions, and worked out in detail the application of them in a particular sphere.

It was in the prompt working of the several permanent sections of the Court that the Norman-French skill in organisation was best seen. By the time of Henry I, at latest, there were several distinct departments. Each chief in charge of a section, bishop or knight or baron, would have a little body of clerks or knights to carry out his orders, and to keep a written record of what had been done, spent, or ordered. Each section had its own judges, secretaries, treasurer, messengers, etc., who knew their own duties and carried them out always on the same plan. It was understood that royal decisions issued by one of these departments, paid for, and registered, were permanent. They would not be upset a few years later by a new minister or king. This soon led to a system, lasting

NORMAN ENGLAND
Showing the Castles built by 1086 and holders of certain fiefs.
Some Castles built after 1086 as (Bristol)
Earldoms Palatine
SCOTLAND
CUMBRIA
St. Cuthbert's Land
Holy I.
Bamborough
Tynemouth
Newcastle
Richmond
BRUCE
PERCY
York
Clithero
LACY
Penwortham
Pontefract
WARENNE
FEVEREL
Tickhill (Blythe)
Lincoln
Rhuddlan
Chester
CHESHIRE
Peak
FERRARS
Stafford
Nottingham
Tutbury
Belvoir
Burton
Oswestry
Shrewsbury
Montgomery
(Bridgenorth)
Quatford
Stamford
Leicester
Castle Acre
Norwich
Stanton
Dudley
Rockingham
Wigmore
Richard's Castle
Worwick
BEAUCHAMP
Huntingdon
Eye
Radnor
LACY
Worcester
(Northampton)
Cambridge
Clare
VERE
MANDEVILLE
Clifford
Hereford
Monmouth
Gloucester
Oxford
Hertford
Colchester
Pembroke
Strigull
Berkeley
Berkhamsted
Wayleigh
Caerleon
Cardiff
(Bristol)
Walkingford
Windsor
London
Rochester
Canterbury
(Devises)
Dover
KENT
Dunster
Salisbury
Winchester
Tonbridge
Montacute
Hampton
BAYEUX
Hastings
Okehampton
Exeter
Launceston
Corfe
Parchester
Carisbrook
Tremoton
CORNWALL
R. of MORTAIN

for centuries, whereby men could secure permanent decisions upon their own claims, or lands, or bargains with each other, if they would pay the heavy fees for an investigation, and for the registering of the decision on the royal rolls. It was termed *fining with the king*, and made a *final* end or *finish*, to any piece of business. The king got a profit in money, the people, the great boon of security.

The principal departments among which the business of the royal court was shared, were (1) the *Curia Regis* proper, or judicial body; (2) the *Exchequer;* (3) the *Chancery;* and there was besides the military department, or bodyguard, under the king's marshal (head of the stables) and constable, who soon became hereditary generals.

(1) The *Curia Regis* proper was the court sitting for judgment under the king, and it travelled about with him; but the king usually delegated his power to a justiciar or chief judge, who ranked as the principal minister. Soon, when under Henry I many people began to pay for permission to come to the royal court for judgment, there were five permanent judges travelling in the king's train, who settled all kinds of suits. Still later there were two sections (Court of King's Bench and Court of Common Pleas), but it was possible for the king in his Council to be appealed to as a final judge, from which has come the modern Appeal to the House of Lords. Henry I began the plan of sending judges to visit the shire-courts and investigate local affairs by royal authority.

(2) *The Exchequer* was the great money-office of the kingdom, and was named from the chequered cloth of squares which covered the table. On the squares, counters were laid and moved about to help the clerks in the difficult task of calculating money. Throughout the Middle Ages only Roman figures were used and tokens were a necessity. The Exchequer had its own judges also.

(3) *The Chancery* was composed of the trusty clerks who conducted the royal correspondence and wrote out royal orders. Originally all writing, which was always in Latin, had to be done by the clergy (clerks) of the royal chapel (*capella*), who were under the direction of the chief of the chapel or *cancellarius* (chancellor). Both office and name go back, through Charles the Great, to the Roman Empire. Till the end of the Middle Ages the officials of the *cancellaria*, or chancery, continued to be clergy, and the king provided them with salaries and rewards by assigning to them ecclesiastical posts such as rectories, prebends and deaneries (what we now call "rural" deaneries), while the picked men were sure to become bishops.

The greater part of a king's life was spent in governing and the chancellor was practically his secretary, almost his second self, who might never let out of his own charge the royal seal, the fixing of which to any document meant a royal command. Seals were used instead of signatures, so that to affix a man's seal without his knowledge was then what forgery is now.

As time went on the different royal departments had their special seals, and to this day every Secretary of State becomes so by receiving "the seals of office," while *the* Seal, called now the Great Seal, is still in the charge of the Lord Chancellor, who has become the head of the law, and is the direct successor of the Norman *cancellarius*, and of its most famous example, Henry II's chancellor, Thomas Becket.

B.—These permanent departments of the King's Court must not be confused with the council which the king would call together now and then to hear his will or give him advice. This came to be called the Great Council, and the sovereign summoned to it any one he liked, high or low, though in the twelfth century the great lords and bishops expected to be summoned as a right. The Council replaced the ancient Witenagemot, the difference between them being that the Witenagemot (Witan) had been a body of powerful men whose advice Edward the Confessor must take, while the Great Council was a body of men whom the king might consult but who must obey him.

Most of the kings had one principal minister, sometimes called the Justiciar, because, when he left England to go to Normandy, the king delegated the supreme power of justice to him. William I's principal ministers were Archbishop Lanfranc, and the king's faithful foster-brother William FitzOsbern, lord of Breteuil. The chief minister of William II was a lowborn priest, Ranulf Flambard (Torch), whom he made bishop of Durham, an astute and violent man whose brutality matched his master's. Henry I used several men as officials and judges from the ranks of the lesser barons, but his right hand was a Norman priest named Roger, whom he made bishop of Salisbury and the second man in the kingdom, and who, together with his son and nephews, took charge of the Exchequer and made it into a famous court for taxation and justice.

(C) Next to the royal courts came the shire-courts, the principal local instruments of government. Every one, even great lords, had to appear there when summoned by the royal judges, and any questions of law too great for the hundred courts or the barons' courts for their tenants, had to be brought to the shire. The sheriff presided in this court and the king appointed him. To this day no man may refuse the office of sheriff without paying a very heavy fine. The sheriff had to collect the *farm* (tax) of food due to the king from many of the lands of his shire, or to get money instead. Under William I the actual produce, the corn, hay, honey, beer, loaves, fowls, etc., was still being collected; but Henry I changed this clumsy and oppressive custom and had the quota of each shire fixed in money instead. This money the sheriff had to convey up to the Exchequer, and there he waited till it was weighed and tested in a furnace—for the coins were so different and often so bad that the weight and quality of the metal when melted had to be considered, not the number of the coins. The sheriff had to look after

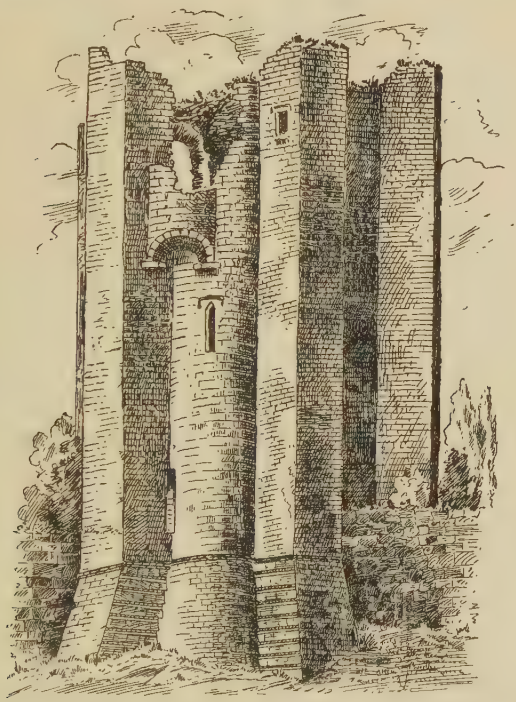
all the royal property in his shire; to see that the palaces were repaired, the parks stocked and fenced and the farms cultivated, and deer, game or fish caught for royal troops or sent to the court, perhaps at the great festivals. If the king came to that county the sheriff must collect men, carts and packhorses to convey the court and its belongings from one royal house to another; if troops were required (the old fyrd), or perhaps woodcutters or roadmakers, he had to collect them and to see that they had weapons or tools. For all this and much other work he had to reckon his expenses and subtract them from the sum he ought to pay the king. In front of the " barons of the Exchequer " stood a table covered with a chequered cloth; a baron marked the squares which the sheriff ought to cover with piles of coin; he gave him a receipt for what he paid and noted if he owed any more. As it was very difficult to work sums in Roman numerals, and as parchment was costly, the reckoning was made in the old English way by notches and scratches on little wooden sticks, called *tallies*. The stick was split in two, and the sheriff and the Exchequer each kept a half, so that neither could cheat, or the bits would not match when compared. This is why we say two accounts *tally* when they agree.

When Henry I sent a justiciar from the Curia Regis to the shire-court the sheriff became a secondary person and had to carry out the justiciar's orders, just as the modern sheriff is responsible for seeing that the judges' sentences are carried out. Lawsuits might be taken out of the shire-court, at the royal order, to be judged in the royal court itself. The king's object was partly to get as many fines paid as possible, and often enormous fines were imposed on men who could pay, but the judges used the same rules for all parts of the country and for all men, and so created a standard. The Conqueror was especially severe on crimes of violence, and his punishments had effect: " amongst other things is not to be forgotten the good peace which he made in this land so that a man, who was himself aught, might fare unmolested over his kingdom with his bosom full of gold; and no man dared slay another, had he done ever so great evil to the other," wrote the chronicler. He ordered the " Law of King Edward " (really Cnut's Law) to be observed, with only a few changes made by himself, and as the Normans had no written laws of their own, this remodelled English law became the law for all.

The favourite form of ordeal among the French was by " wager of battle," or duel, which was once introduced into England. This the English considered very cruel. As Henry's judges did not favour ordeals at all, the kings gradually allowed men to use the royal courts instead and produce evidence instead of fighting.

William Rufus cared nothing for justice. Ranulf Flambard once (1094) ordered a gathering of the national fyrd, to go with the king to fight abroad: they must come to the sea-coast, each man with ten shillings journey-money provided by his shire. They came,

and Flambard took the money from them and dismissed them to beg their way home. Henry I was wiser. His courts of justice became so well known for their fairness that rich men preferred to pay much money for the favour of having their suits judged by the royal judges : " He sold justice, but it was justice that he sold," and when he died he had the noble title given to him of " the Lion of Justice."



Conisborough Castle. The Keep from outside (based on an illustration in Clarke's *Medieval Military Architecture.*)

All these three kings found their principal danger in the insubordination of the feudal barons. The barons fiercely hated the enforcement of justice. They claimed as their right the waging of " private war " on each other, and resented being obliged to attend in the shire-courts. As early as 1074 the heirs of the earldoms of Norfolk and Hereford rose in rebellion, an outbreak which gave William an excuse for putting Waltheof to death on the pretext that he had known of their plan. He had indeed informed Lanfranc of it and so secured the royal victory. Next, William's eldest son Robert, in 1078, headed the rising of the savage Robert of Belesme

and of Robert Mowbray, the greatest baron in the north. Robert had been recognised as duke of Normandy, by his father's wish, but when he demanded a share of power, either Normandy or England for himself, William sneeringly replied: "It is not my custom to take off my clothes till I go to bed." It was William who had given the prince the nickname by which he was always known, Curt-hose, "Little-boots," because he was rather short in the legs and very consequential. Robert, helped by his uncle, Bishop Odo, raised a really dangerous rebellion in Normandy. William took an army of English over the sea to meet him, and at the battle of Gerberoi (1079) the king's life was saved by the self-sacrifice of an English thegn. Robert had to submit, but the traitor most severely and deservedly punished was Odo. He tried to set up the claim that laymen could not lawfully judge a bishop, a member of a holy caste. "I arrest, not the bishop of Bayeux, but the earl of Kent," replied the king, and Odo was shut up in close imprisonment.

As soon as the Conqueror died (in France, 1087) Robert inherited Normandy as by right, but England, being a new acquisition, was, according to the feeling of the day, at the disposal of the Conqueror. He wished it to go to William, who instantly crossed to England bearing his father's message to Archbishop Lanfranc, and was by him crowned. His first act was to release Bishop Odo; his second, to collect English troops to quell the revolt which Odo instantly set on foot. To win their support, William II promised them (1088) great boons: he would give them "the best laws that ever were in the land," abolish the heavy forest laws and keep good order; and hereupon the English fyrd mustered loyally and enabled him to take Odo prisoner again, and to overcome Robert, who made a feeble attempt to invade the kingdom. For his cruelty and arrogance they hated the bishop of Bayeux, and as he led his garrison out of his surrendered castle of Rochester they shouted: "Halters, bring halters, to the gallows with the bishop!" But feudal custom treated traitors gently, and Odo went safely to the continent.

William Rufus (Red Dragon, from his fiery face and hair) thought no more of his pledges, and when Lanfranc reminded him of them he angrily asked: "Who is there that can fulfil all he promises?" Lanfranc died next year and the young king entered on a ten years' career of outrageous extortion and vigorous warfare. He would not allow a new archbishop to be chosen, that he might himself collect and keep all the revenues. He announced that any one who could take it might have land in Wales, and so began a war of conquest on the border. He attacked his brothers in Normandy and drove Robert to such straits that he at last (1096) pledged his duchy to William for a huge sum of money (extorted from the English) and set out on the first Crusade with many friends, including Edgar Etheling. When Malcolm, king of Scots, raided the north, William overcame him, and, after accepting his

submission, deprived him of Cumbria, and re-founded Carlisle. William II was too despotic for the taste of the barons, but he had so much money to pay troops that it was dangerous to rebel. In 1095, however, Robert Mowbray, earl of Northumberland beyond the Tyne, rose, in league with Robert, but the king won and took his castles of Bamborough and Tynemouth. The only man who dared to withstand Rufus was Archbishop Anselm, and even he gave up the hopeless struggle and withdrew to Rome in 1097, while the king kept bishoprics vacant to secure the revenues, and made the court shameful by every sort of vice.

The fierce rule of William II was suddenly cut short by his strange death in the New Forest. An arrow from some unknown hand struck him, possibly by accident, and he was found dead. All his train fled to protect their own homes from the anarchy expected, and at last a charcoal-burner laid the body of Rufus on his little cart, "like a boar," and took it into Winchester, where the clergy buried him, though they dared not say the Christian burial service over so evil a man.

The Etheling Henry had galloped straight to that city and already secured the royal treasure, after which it was easy to get such members of the Royal Council as were near to elect him king. Then he rode to the West Minster, and on the Sunday stood in state before the altar and promised "to put down all unrighteousness that had been in his brother's time, and to hold the best laws that ever stood in any king's day before him." Then the Bishop of London crowned him king, seeing that Archbishop Anselm was abroad and the Archbishop of York a very aged man.

Henry had been born and brought up in England and could speak English. During his brother's reign the people of both England and Normandy had looked to him hopefully; and as he knew that the French barons would prefer the careless Robert for king, and that Robert had a good claim to be regarded as the rightful heir, he relied mainly on the English people to support him. As proof of his good intentions he threw Ranulf Flambard—bishop of Durham though he was—into prison, wrote to beg Anselm to return, "like a father to his son Henry and the English people," and asked for the hand of Edgar Etheling's niece Matilda (or Maude) the daughter of Margaret and Malcolm of Scotland, because she was "of England's right king-kin." She had been brought up in an English convent, and great was the joy of the people at the marriage. The barons, who had always despised Henry, because he was scholarly and calm, and conciliated the English, sneered at the royal pair and wished for a "chivalrous" king like Rufus, or a good-natured one like Robert. But when next year (1101) Robert came back from Jerusalem, took possession of Normandy, and came to claim England, the barons, who rose to support him, found that the king, the Church and the people together were too strong for them. Archbishop Anselm, who had returned and had married

Henry and Matilda, came himself at the head of the Canterbury knights to support the king, and Robert accepted an offer of money and other kind promises instead of the crown and went back to Normandy. The rebellion of his supporters, the great earls of Montgomery and Shrewsbury, and their friends, the savage Robert of Belesme and Count Roger of "between Ribble and Mersey," was quickly defeated by the steady siege of their castles—Arundel, Tickhill, Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury—by the English fyrds (1102). In the ancient way the victorious soldiers made a song on their king's triumph—

> "Rejoice, King Henry, and give thanks to God, for thou becamest a free king on the day when thou didst beat down Robert of Belesme and drive him out of the kingdom."

There was an old hatred between him and the king, for when Henry was still a youth a Norman town of Robert of Belesme's had offered itself to the prince, who, having accepted it, succeeded in protecting it from the cruel baron. Henry next pursued this quarrel into Normandy, and English troops helped him to win the decisive battle of Tenchebrai (1106), which they regarded as a kind of avenging of Hastings, for it made the English king duke of Normandy, which was destined to remain united with England for another century. As for Duke Robert, he became his brother's prisoner, and was imprisoned, securely but not unkindly, first in Devizes castle then in Cardiff, till he died in 1135, just before Henry.

Henry was a powerful, prosperous king and never betrayed the confidence of his subjects. "Good man he was and there was much awe of him. No man dared transgress against another in his time. Peace he made for men and beasts," wrote the chronicler. This peace he maintained partly by sheriffs, partly by drastic use of inquests and heavy judicial fines. The men who had to carry out the system found the task so hard and so unpopular that they paid great sums to get exempted. In Yorkshire the guardian of one forest, a Norman, offered £50 to get off; the "judges and jurors"—English—of the shire offered £100 to be judges and jurors no more.

Henry's one great calamity came, not from his enemies, but from the vicious carelessness of a crew of Norman sailors, who got drunk just before they set sail for England, and so lost the *White Ship* with all on board, of whom the chief was Henry's son and heir, the Etheling William. Not only was this a crushing blow to the king, but it brought untold woe to his subjects by causing a civil war when he died over the succession to the throne. Henry and Matilda had still a daughter, Matilda, and Henry endeavoured during the fourteen years of life which remained to him to secure the crown for her. But neither in England nor in Normandy had it ever been heard of that a woman should rule, nor did the haughty temper of Matilda win her any personal friends.

She had been married when very young to the powerful German Emperor Henry V, and had become accustomed to a dignified and despotic conduct which did not make her at all unpopular in her German home. But on the emperor's death her father insisted that she must return to him, and he married her to Geoffrey, the young count of Anjou, by way of closing a long feud between the Angevin and Norman families. But the marriage was hateful to the Norman barons, who would never agree to serve a count of Anjou.

Henry lived to see two grandsons, and died in 1135, hoping that the English and Norman feudal lords, and especially his trusted servant Roger of the Exchequer, now bishop of Salisbury, would keep the oaths they had solemnly sworn and crown the Empress Matilda.

With almost one accord barons and bishops alike ignored their pledges and crowned Henry's nephew, Stephen count of Blois, who, in both feudal and English opinion, was the natural royal heir, since no one could imagine it practicable to crown Matilda's infant son, Henry.

WILLIAM I. (From a seal.)

JOHN. (From a seal.)

XII

CHURCH AND STATE UNDER THE NORMANS

(ii) The Church; its Relations with Rome

One of the most sweeping changes resulting from the Norman Conquest was the severance made by William I between the Church and the nation. The Anglo-Saxons, however hazy their notion of religion may have been, at least made no such division of life into two portions—religious and worldly. Their Christianity was a part of their daily and national existence. But this was a continuation of early conditions which had long since disappeared on the continent, and in treating the clergy and monks as though they alone formed the *Church*, from which the lay people were almost shut out, William was, in his own eyes and other people's, making a reform and bringing England up to date.

The king ordered that the clergy should no longer appear in the various courts of law, but have courts of their own, and be judged only there and by the "spiritual" or *Canon Law* (the law of the churchmen). There had always been Church courts, where the bishops dealt with the spiritual transgressions of their clergy, and for helping in such business they had appointed special officials, learned in the canon law, called archdeacons. But now the churchmen were to judge all suits in which a cleric was concerned, as well as the transgressions of the people in the religious sphere, offences against good morals, questions about marriages, and even quarrels over wills, for a will was only made on a man's deathbed when he received the last sacraments. Thus a great many lay people were called into the church courts, after the Conquest, where the bishop's officers, in judging of their guilt and portioning out the penance they must do, incidentally settled for them questions of property and inheritance. The fees and fines they paid went into the bishops' coffers.

This new scheme of church organisation required vigorous machinery to work it. In old days, Archbishop Dunstan had sat at the south door of Canterbury cathedral and personally dealt justice, with one archdeacon to help him. Now, every diocese was divided into several archdeaconries, each corresponding to a shire or a Saxon tribal district, and as time went on it was natural that busy, ambitious bishops, often called to London, Rouen, or

DIOCESES, III
after the
NORMAN CONQUEST.
DURHAM
CARLISLE
YORK
LICHFIELD
and
COVENTRY
LINCOLN
NORWICH
ELY
BANGOR
St. ASAPH
HEREFORD
St. DAVIDS
LLANDAFF
WORCESTER
LONDON
SALISBURY
ROCH'TR.
CANTERBURY
BATH and WELLS
WINCHESTER
CHICHESTER
EXETER

Rome, should delegate to the archdeacons a great deal of episcopal work. But an archdeacon was not necessarily a priest but a lawyer, trained, usually, in Italy, where Bologna and Pavia had great schools of law: and so the legal and business side of church organisation began to be at least as important as the religious side, and in time would overshadow it.

Another change, urgently desired by the pope, was that the choice of new bishops should be left to the clergy, practically, to the cathedral clergy (*Chapter*) of each diocese. This arrangement had a long history, not nearly completed in the eleventh century, and filled with strife. In the early Christian ages the whole congregation of each place had united to choose a new bishop, who was then consecrated by the other bishops. When dioceses grew large, this, of course, became impossible. The rich funds which bishops had to distribute made the office coveted, and quarrels and even violence often occurred. The clergy endeavoured to stop such scandals by influencing the election, but the kings and princes also were deeply concerned to secure bishops who would be loyal, or would take their part.

In England bishops had always been chosen by agreement between the king and the Witan, among whom sat the principal clergy. Sometimes the pope had been entrusted by the king with the choice of one. But though the king's voice was really decisive, the selection had not been a political matter until the appointment of Stigand.

It had also been a custom, which by the eleventh century had developed into a rule, that new archbishops should go to Rome, to make themselves known to the principal bishop of western Christendom, and the pope signified his recognition by the gift of a *pall*,[1] and as Stigand had none it was clear that he had not been accepted by the pope. By bestowing the pall, or not, therefore, the popes had established a claim to accept or refuse the royal choice of an archbishop.

Now the popes maintained, very naturally, that as the authority of a bishop was a sacred one, it was in the highest degree improper that a layman, even a king, should assume power to confer it; only the clergy themselves could rightly bestow this spiritual authority. This was not held to apply in the naming of parish priests by the lord of the place, because the rectors were already priests before they were appointed to the parish by the lord, who represented the builder of the church. These lay patrons need not, therefore, be interfered with: but to name a bishop was to confer the right to fresh spiritual orders, and to require a bishop to do homage to a lay sovereign was by the popes regarded as placing the spiritual below the worldly authority.

It was the same consideration of the sacredness of the clergy which caused the popes to insist on the separate law-courts, as

[1] *See* Chapter III.

though the clergy were too holy for laymen to be able to judge them, even in wholly secular causes.

The papal demands were quite in harmony with the feeling of that time. The feudal idea of every lord "holding" from the lord next above him seemed to be exactly paralleled in the sphere of religion. The spiritual authority of the clergy would be *held* from the bishops, they would *hold* of the archbishop and he of the pope. Similarly the popes seemed to have inherited their authority from St. Peter, whom they were fond of describing as the Prince of the Apostles.

As soon as William I had secured his hold on the country, he (1070) brought papal legates to hold synods in England, and to begin a reform of the discipline of the clergy and monks. They helped him by decreeing the deposition of Stigand and of some other bishops and abbots. Lanfranc was at once made archbishop of Canterbury, and the other sees and abbeys, as fast as they fell vacant, were also given to foreigners. Before the close of the reign only one English bishop was left, the saintly Wulfstan of Worcester. At the same time the bishops' seats were removed from country places to the principal towns. The seat of the great east-central diocese, which stretched from the Humber to the Thames, was removed from Dorchester beside Oxford to Lincoln; that of the Somerset diocese from Wells to Bath. The East Anglian bishop left Elmham for Thetford, and then for Norwich. The bishop of Sussex went from Selsey to Chichester, and the bishop of Wiltshire from Sherborne to (Old) Sarum. The bishop of west-central England had his seat sometimes at Chester, sometimes at Coventry, sometimes at the ancient site of Lichfield.

The foreigners whom William placed over the English Church shared the Norman contempt for the English. They appointed foreigners to the richest livings and church offices, and the village clergy and people must have felt that even religion had taken on the likeness of an alien tyranny.

Many of the foreign bishops and abbots were, however, excellent as well as able men, and they introduced a much-needed reform into the monasteries and churches. As all men agreed that a self-denying and ascetic life marked the path of holiness, the comfortable luxury, or the negligence and laziness, of English clergy and monks had profoundly lowered the standard; and when the new abbots insisted that the monks should keep their rule better and attend the services regularly and that the priests should perform the services more correctly, the change was for the better although the harshness, and even violence, of a few men made it hateful. The Norman abbot of Glastonbury, finding the English monks unwilling to give up their ancient chants for the more elaborate foreign music, fetched archers to terrify them, and many were hurt and a few actually killed, in the church itself. But he was an unusual example and William I sent him home in disgrace, though

William II allowed him to purchase permission to return to the unfortunate monastery.

To one of the best of the new bishops, the Conqueror's nephew, St. Osmund of Salisbury (then a fortress-town on the hill of Old Sarum), the English Church owed the first compilation of what became its principal service-book, the Manual and Missal, called the Use of Salisbury. It was completed later, and from it a great part of our Prayer Book was translated in the sixteenth century.

Most of the new bishops and abbots were energetic builders. The Saxon cathedrals and churches to which they succeeded were smaller and more clumsily built than the buildings which at that time were rising in France and its neighbour-lands. The famous Burgundian monastery of Cluny had erected a church which reached the utmost possible to the masons of the tenth century, and other abbots, bishops and kings strove to match it. Edward the Confessor's West Minster, and several other churches (as at Bradford-on-Avon), had already begun the new fashion when the Normans came to stimulate it.

The eleventh century, then, was an age of great building; and, as the craftsmen had not yet found out all the mechanical principles necessary, they made up for want of knowledge by piling very great masses of stone together with thick mortar, in hopes that the sheer weight would keep the building safely together.

The cathedrals of Canterbury, York, Rochester and Hereford lay in ruins, so the Norman prelates brought over skilled men, probably in small bands or societies, to direct the Saxon workmen. There was little distinction made at that time between architects, working masons, and carvers; all were termed masons and worked together.

It took about twenty years to finish the great cathedrals designed by the men of the Conquest, so that those begun under William I, and Rufus, were not dedicated and used till Henry's time. Of them we can still see large portions at Durham, Winchester, Gloucester, Rochester, Norwich, and at Ely, Peterborough and St. Albans, which were originally the churches of great monasteries. Norman work in churches is distinguished by thick, plain columns in the nave, small columns in porches, ornamented often with shallow patterns, and round arches, often with a zigzag pattern, cut with a small axe.

Lanfranc, more anxious for practical work than glorious buildings, contrived to complete his cathedral at Canterbury in seven years, but it had to be rebuilt in the next generation, when Archbishop Anselm replaced it by a very large and much more beautiful one. Lanfranc's other buildings illustrate his character. He placed a stone-built hospital for poor sick men and women, with its church, outside one of the gates; and outside another, a hospital and a church for lepers, and built several churches and many manor- houses on the estates in Kent which formed the endowment of the archbishopric.

EDWIN, THE MONK OF CANTERBURY (11th century).

Naturally the barons and the Norman kings were more concerned at first with building castles than churches, but as soon as their safety and power was secured they were zealous to build stone churches. For the external practices of the Christian faith the Normans had great respect. Even kings like Rufus and Henry I were regularly present at mass, though they spent the time in talk or in business, and Henry declared that his reason for making Roger his chaplain was that he said mass faster than any other priest. Even when people set out early to the hunt, a curtailed service, the hunting mass, must be attended. Hence it is not really surprising that the men who destroyed hundreds of houses, perhaps half the town, as at Chester, Lincoln or Norwich, to clear a site for their castle, should afterwards build churches. They were anxious, not so much to benefit the citizens, as to honour God, and to ensure (as they believed) credit in heaven for a pious deed, which would help to save their bloodstained souls. So, at Oxford, Robert of Oilly, besides his own keep and a bridge, built at least three churches, and maintained a company of clergy and scholars in the castle church. At Bristol, after the castle and the circuit of the city walls were finished, rose half-a-dozen churches and a monastery. At Cambridge the first Norman custodian built a church for canons beside the castle. At Lincoln, where the castle and the new cathedral of the Norman bishop usurped one half of the hill-top on which the city stood, the citizens who were thus driven to its foot built two noble churches for themselves. Even in the desolated north, York rose from its ruins under Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux, and the bishop of Durham helped a small colony of monks to rebuild the famous churches of Jarrow and Wearmouth.

Nor were the towns alone provided for. Often the lord of a country manor would build a tiny church beside his fortified house, such as may still be found frequently in Oxfordshire; and if the earlier church were built of wood, and was left to fall down, the country people would come to their lord's church. Probably during the Norman period the parish system—assigning every spot to one special church—was completed. The lord, as founder of the church, henceforth exercised the right and duty of finding a new parson for it when the parish priest died, and this was the origin of lay *patronage*, or right of presenting a priest to a parish living. The tithes, which had previously been given according to the wish of the Saxon landowners, either to cathedral, minster, or local church, were now always rendered to the parish church.

Under Lanfranc and his successors more of the cathedrals had monasteries attached to them, as some already had, and where this was the case the monks replaced the canons and formed the *Chapter*. Even where the canons remained as the chapter they were made to adopt a more strict rule of life, a semi-monastic rule (Austin Canons), and no longer might marry. Canons remained in the north, at

York and its three subordinate minsters, Ripon, Beverley and Southwell. Ripon had ceased to be a bishopric, and so had Lindisfarne and Hexham, which now lay in the bishopric of Durham, but the three minsters remained, with canons and a special organisation of chapters, schools and archdeacons, in fact, with episcopal staffs, working under the archbishop. But in spite of the archbishop's endeavours to insist on the Augustinian Rule, his canons soon succeeded in restoring the lax English system, each securing a personal share of the endowment, and his own house. This was the more remarkable because those reforms in the Church which Pope Gregory VII most insisted upon, depended upon the clergy remaining single (celibate). This had always, of course, been the rule for monks, but not for "secular" (non-monastic) clergy, and in France and northern Italy, and in the north generally, as well as in England, the parish priests and the canons of the great minsters were usually married. However, it was believed by all that the single life must be more holy, and the habit of making the parish churches hereditary had resulted in all kinds of abuses. Gregory VII believed that a celibate clergy would be more religious, more united in their attitude towards the lay world and its rulers, and more obedient to the pope; they would form a spiritual army which the popes might use against "the world"—for he regarded lay people as a kind of enemy to the "religious." His forecast of a "spiritual army" proved to a large degree correct, but the celibate clergy did not become much more holy and unworldly than their predecessors.

In order to establish this revolution in the Church—for it was no less—Gregory VII required the archbishops in the different countries to make the new law known to their clergy. Lanfranc, therefore, called a Church Council to Winchester, in 1076, but he laid the matter before it, not as a command from the pope, but as a question which the English Church must decide for herself. The council decreed, certainly under Lanfranc's influence, that henceforth priests should no longer take wives nor married men be ordained, but that existing marriages should not be dissolved. The new order was not always observed even in the south of England, within reach of Canterbury, and in the north it was frequently disregarded for another two centuries.

Only second to the provision of cathedrals and their chapters came the restoration of schools, intended chiefly for the training of the clergy. Herein York, as befitted the home of Alcuin, was foremost. Probably the old English schools had never disappeared, for under Archbishop Thomas there were several schools in or near the city, and he appointed a "Master of the Scholars," called the Chancellor, to control all the schools within ten miles, and to teach theology to the advanced students in the close of the minster itself. Such schools would teach both lay boys and young clergy, but the advanced students were doubtless the latter. There were

similar chancellors, or head masters, for other cathedral schools, but the schools under the secular canons, as at London, Wells or Hereford, were more vigorous than those under the control of monks. The small schools in the abbeys were now for choir-boys and those who would become monks. The canons' schools were for young clergy and other lads whose parents could send them to learn with the clerks. Latin was the one medium of study, and the new chronicles, which began to be kept in some of the abbeys, were written in Latin. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle could not be continued in that tongue for more than three generations, and ends in 1154. Probably after that time no educated man could write the old language.

For the greater part of England, a new, and henceforth the principal, centre of learning arose in Oxford. This, the second city of southern England from Alfred to Stephen, had been nearly destroyed by the Conqueror to crush its resistance. It was rebuilt, still as a fortress city, the key of the road from the Thames valley to the north and north-west. Perhaps its strong position, ringed about with waters which could only be crossed by intricate fords, made it a safe and convenient resort for learned teachers from the continent, who could reach it easily from London. Under the Saxon kings, and until 1075, the seat of the vast east-Mercian bishopric lay at Dorchester, only nine miles off, and may have been connected with the school of the canons of St. Frideswide. The establishment by Henry I of a royal palace at the very gate of the city would provide a special "king's peace," and perhaps attract learned visitors, whom Henry "Beau-clerk" encouraged. At all events, clerical and secular masters were teaching students at Oxford in law and theology soon after the accession of Henry I, and a lecturer from Paris lectured to nearly one hundred clerks at a time. It is remarkable that in many of the towns, new or old, under Norman lords, very early mention of schools occurs, as at Richmond, Pontefract, Doncaster and Bradford: and from them, as from the ancient schools, such as Beverley or York, there would come students to the more learned lectures at Oxford.

The most difficult question which Lanfranc had to settle was that of the relation of the Church in England to the papacy.

The semi-isolation of England had abruptly ceased. She was now in continual communication with France. It was probably easier to travel from London or Canterbury to Rouen, than to get to Chester or Hereford. There was now a clear knowledge of the principles of Rome, and the pope could know what went on in England; the popes of this century were extremely upright and able men. It was the tendency of the eleventh century everywhere to increase the authority of rulers; partly to procure deliverance from enemies such as Vikings, Saracens and Hungarians, partly to get established among the nations now arising out of the welter of competing tribes some system of law and order. The more men

learned about the ancient Roman empire, which was still a strong tradition, the more did they desire a unity of authority and the more did they turn for that unity to Rome, where they could, in that century, find an authority which seemed to be impartial and inspired by ideas far nobler than those which usually animated kings and nobles.

The conception which these popes formed of their own position was certainly high in its ideal, but they were not able to disentangle the spiritual kingdom of their dreams from the worldly and visible powers of ordinary kingdoms. They expected to give commands which involved the actual conduct of worldly men, and to direct how kings and lords should use their wealth or arms. They no longer were content to advise and help, but began to treat other bishops as inferiors bound to an absolute obedience.

In the eyes of the popes the churchmen ought to form a class which knew no nationality or family ties but only those of "the Church," and they ought not only to be detached from worldly interests, but to be treated by all laymen, including sovereigns, as a superior caste, above and beyond the scope of the laws, or taxes, or customs of the country in which they happened to be placed. This meant that the clergy would no more be a part of any nation, and that they would be treated as forming the Church without the laity, and both these new ideas were directly opposed to the thought and custom of English churchmen, from Augustine to Lanfranc.

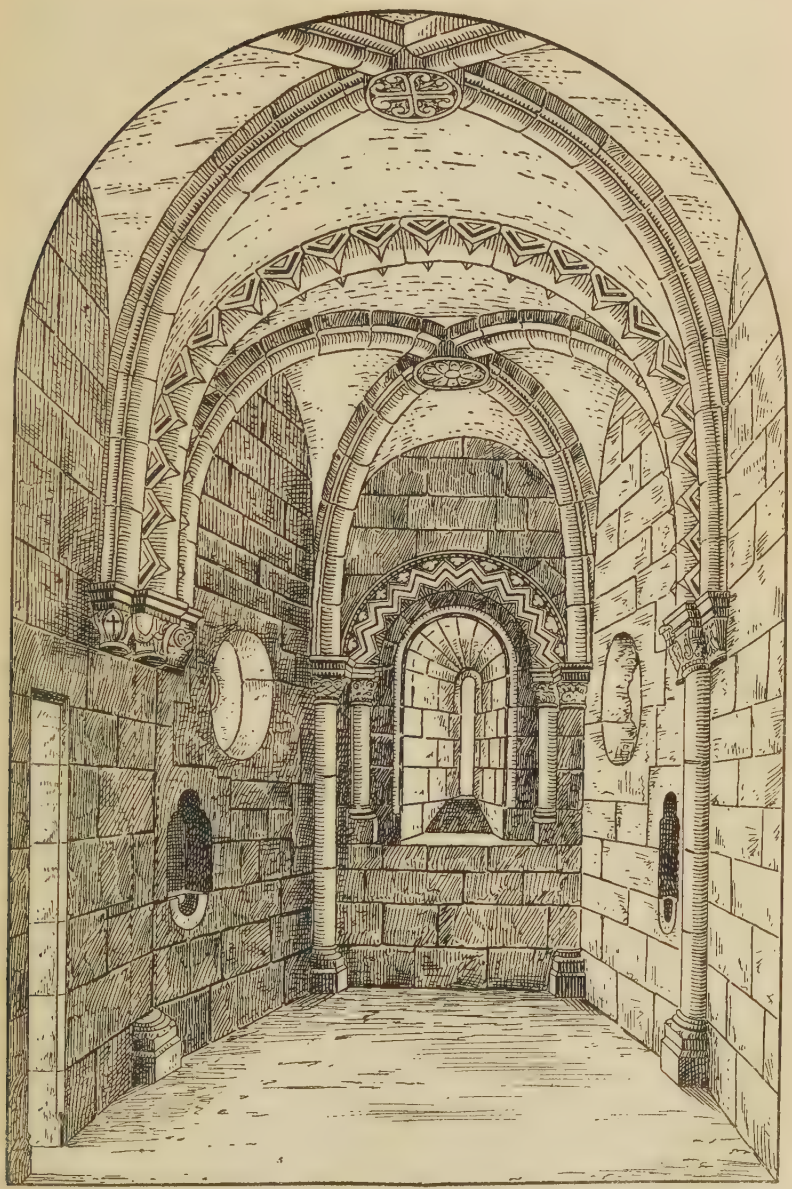
Following up the action of Alexander II, who blessed William's invasion, Gregory VII claimed a complete control over both the English Church and the kingdom, and required William to take an oath of homage to the Holy See, and to pay tribute as a vassal. Lanfranc he summoned to visit Rome, there to report and to receive the papal commands. Neither the king nor the archbishop obeyed. William replied that he would send the ancient gift of "Peter's Pence," because the kings of the English, who had voluntarily offered it, had always done so; but he would give neither tribute nor homage, since they had never done so. He laid down the fundamental rules ever after observed by English kings: (1) that the king must be the first to make the national acknowledgment of a new pope; (2) that no legate, or papal letter, should enter the kingdom without the king's permission; (3) that no royal servant should be excommunicated without his consent; (4) that bishops might not repair to Rome without his leave; they were his subjects, and it was a universal rule that no subject might go out of the realm without first obtaining the royal permission.

In the same way (as already shown) did Lanfranc treat the papal commands as to the marriage of the clergy, and some other points; he clearly regarded the authority of the Roman pontiff rather as that of an elder brother, or even a mother, than as that of a master. The English Church must herself take the responsibility of accepting

and carrying out the pope's wishes, and was free to modify, or even possibly reject, any decree which seemed to her unwise. It was the same attitude as that of the great early archbishops, Theodore and Dunstan. Lanfranc was a sufficiently learned scholar to know that the despotic claims of Gregory were derived from the book of forged letters, known as the "False Decretals," and to disapprove of them. He was too wise a statesman to help to subject a free kingdom and a free church to the domination of a pope; and Gregory VII, arbitrary as he usually was, did not venture to quarrel with either the king or the archbishop.

Unfortunately Lanfranc's successor, the saintly Anselm, another learned Italian who had become famous at Bec, did not maintain the same position. William II, who misused his power of nominating bishops by keeping sees empty in order to take the revenues, misused also his royal independence by not acknowledging any pope when the occasion of a double election at Rome gave him the excuse. Most right-thinking men decided alike that Urban II was the rightful pope, though some decided for his rival. William Rufus alone refused to pronounce for either, and thus, though he had been driven by the compulsion of his nobles into naming Anselm archbishop, after a vacancy of four years, he cut off the new archbishop and the whole English Church from communion with the rest of Europe, and from obtaining help or advice from Rome. Such a state of isolation, in times when the unity of the Christian Church was one of the main principles of spiritual life and thought, was appalling to the bishops and clergy, and Anselm took on himself to acknowledge Urban II.

The king had the better theory but the worse practice; Anselm a better practice but a worse position in theory. The king was furious at Anselm's presumption and was glad to send him out of the kingdom. He went to Rome in 1097 and there dwelt till Henry, on the death of Rufus, recalled him. Unfortunately he returned having promised to obey a fresh papal rule about the appointment of bishops, for it seemed to him that his duty was simply to obey the pope, as a monk would obey his abbot. Pope Paschal II aimed at securing the free election of bishops—that is, their election by the clergy alone. The customary manner of appointing the bishop was by the sovereign placing a ring on his finger and putting the pastoral staff (crozier) into his hand; after this, the bishop had to kneel to take the oath of homage to the sovereign, in return for all the lands which went with the dignity. This ceremony was termed *investing* the bishop, and was quite distinct from his consecration by the archbishop or other bishops. The pope now forbade kings to continue to invest bishops, and Anselm therefore refused to do homage to Henry I or to consecrate those new bishops for the sees so long kept vacant by Rufus, whom the king, with praiseworthy promptitude, had already invested. As Henry would not give way either, there was a deadlock for six years, the sees still remaining



CONISBOROUGH CASTLE. Interior of Chapel, based on a drawing in Clarke's *Medieval Military Architecture.*

without their bishops. This battle over Investitures was being fought by all the monarchs of Europe. The other English bishops supported the king. It seemed a question of common sense: as the bishops controlled such vast wealth they must be the king's subjects for it. The German emperor, Henry V (Henry's son-in-law), bluntly announced that if his bishops would relinquish their lands, he would cease to invest; a suggestion which the unworldly Paschal II was ready to accept, but that the bishops broke out into rage. At length Paschal began to excommunicate the English bishops for supporting Henry, and Anselm and Henry then contrived to make a compromise (1107), with the pope's consent, which gave the apparent victory to the pope while securing to the king the real point. The king ceased to give the episcopal ring and staff, but the bishops would continue to do homage, before they were consecrated, for their lands and revenues (called their *temporalities*). In truth, the pope was defeated, for the kings continued to appoint bishops by naming to the chapters the person whom they might choose, and there was no possibility of really "free election."

The vigour which Lanfranc and his fellow-bishops had begun to infuse into their diocesan clergy was not immediately so noticeable in the monasteries. Some stronger impulse than a zeal for building and organising was required to bring recruits to the dull but arduous life of the cloister.

It was during the reign of Henry I that the first wave reached England of the great monastic revival begun in France and its neighbour-lands by the famous St. Bernard and the new Cistercian Order, named from its first house at Citeaux. Bernard was a Burgundian, but the founder of the Order was an Englishman, Stephen Harding, so that when Bernard heard that in unhappy England religion (by which he meant monasticism) had almost perished, mindful of the founder of the Order, he organised a mission, under a born Englishman, "to tell in the isles the story of the glory of the Lord." Henry I received the monks kindly and gave them permission to preach freely; and throughout his reign and that of Stephen the great men welcomed fresh colonies of them and founded monasteries for them, so that in twenty-five years fifty houses of "White Monks" had arisen. Their earliest house was Waverley, but their most famous ones arose in the devastated north, where they were indeed almost as angels to the miserable and now half-pagan people. A public-spirited knight of Yorkshire, Walter Espec, established a party of them at Rievaulx, and soon there were Cistercians at Fountains, Kirkstall, Melrose, Whalley and many other places, including, further south, Woburn, Tintern and Whitelands.

Their early homes were not the stately abbeys at whose beautiful ruins we now wonder, but plain little thatched huts, built in the wildest dales. The colony at Fountains had sheltered at first

under the boughs of a great tree while they built their church, which, with the Cistercians, always came first.

The ideals of the Cistercians were self-sacrifice and the practice of brotherly love. Their rule bade them live by the labour of their hands, but spend a great part of their time in prayer and praise. This had originally been the rule for all monasteries, but by this time the Benedictine was as often out of his cloister as in it, on business, farming, study and the like, whereas the Cistercians stayed in their house. They preferred a wilderness to settle in, that they might not accept for themselves lands and homes desired by other men, and might dwell far from the temptations of wealth and comfort. St. Bernard had declared that the ambition of raising splendid buildings had made corporate pride and greed as dangerous to monks as any personal passions.

The Cistercians at first gave an example of the hardest work pursued uncomplainingly, of absolute self-denial in food, clothing and housing, of a life of mutual affection, of ceaseless prayer and, usually, of charity to the surrounding poor. The nobles who endowed them with miles of uninhabited moor or marsh gave what cost them very little, and were principally moved by the comfort which it was to their uneasy consciences to have secured the prayers of such saintly men for their very sinful souls. But great and poor alike reverenced the white monks for their holy lives.

The benefit derived from their skilful farming was untold. Everywhere the monks practised the best tillage and cleared or drained their wildernesses, and as these were often better suited for pasturage than for ploughing, they began to keep enormous flocks of sheep (the mainstay of the dairy in those times) of whose wool they manufactured their own garments, while they sold the surplus fleeces to others. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that they accidentally founded the early woollen trade of England.

Not that they were always beloved; the first prior of Kirkstall pulled down a parish church because it disturbed the monks to hear the congregation at their prayers, and the monks of Jervaulx carried off the best bell of the parish church to the abbey; such acts as these could be done because the Norman barons and gentry adopted the bad custom of endowing monasteries by transferring to them churches which had been already endowed in past times. The monastery then became the rector, and all the lands and the tithes which had formed the endowment for church and priests went to the monks. They had, certainly, to provide for the services, and some monk who was in holy orders would be sent from time to time to perform them, but too often they were curtailed or omitted, while the parishioners were totally neglected, and many a small school must have ceased to exist. The alms which the abbey bestowed on the poor did not make up for this cutting away of religion from the people. When, as sometimes happened, the church and lands were made a gift to a French abbey, the

plight of the people was worse still. All the money which could be made was sent abroad, and little was paid out at home. To this day Weedon Beck and Tooting Bec preserve the name of Lanfranc's abbey, to which the Conqueror gave those estates.

The plan of giving to the new abbeys that which cost the donors nothing was continued for some two centuries. A whole village or town, or a school, might be transferred; as Reading was bestowed on its new abbey, and Bedford on Newnham Priory. Sometimes villeins, with their families, were given as slaves to till the soil. In Bristol an ancient school existed in the care of a local gild, but the Norman lord made it over to Keynsham Priory. The school of Gloucester was given to Llanthony, that of St. Albans to the abbey: evidently the school fees were worth having. Anything which could bring in money was accepted, and in fact the establishment of so many monasteries proved finally to stimulate—less the religion—than the agriculture and commerce of England.

XIII

THE TOWNS: 1066–1189

"London with its ships, Winchester with its wine;
Hereford abundant in flocks, Worcester in corn;
Bath with its wells, Salisbury with its wild beasts,
Canterbury with its fish, York with its woods;
Exeter famous for mines;
Norwich near at hand to the Danes, Chester to the Irish,
Chichester to the French, Durham to the Norwegians;
The people of Lincoln infinitely handsome;
Fair is Ely, by its position, and Rochester, to behold."

So some old lines, apparently of the time of Henry I, summed up the characteristics of the chief cities of England, perhaps as a kind of geography lesson. London was, of course, always the first city of this island in importance, but Winchester had been, till Canute, the royal home and treasure city, London being, perhaps, too independent, or too near to seafaring enemies, to come completely under royal control. London was always a distinct unit in the kingdom, not a part of Essex or Mercia, still less of Wessex or Kent, though it had acknowledged Mercian or West-Saxon kings when they became head-kings of England. It owed much to foreign settlers: to Danes and Norsemen, still remembered by their churches of St. Olave and St. Clement *Danes;* to Easterlings (Germans from the Rhine or the Baltic); to Flemings, who were probably still much like Englishmen in language; above all, to the French merchants who were so active that the Confessor gave them a wharf, mart and houses of their own at Dowgate, like the settlement made by a colony of Flemings from Ghent.

The walls of London enclosed the steep hill rising on the northern shore of the Thames and bounded by the inlet of the Fleet river on the west. In the midst was the open market-place, called the Cheap; west of it, on the edge of the hill, stood St. Paul's, from whose churchyard the road ran down to Ludgate, above the Fleet. The famous bridge stretched across the Thames almost on the eastern edge of the city, so as to block the river to ocean-sailing ships and thus defend London from a surprise. It was built of wood, supported by great posts and piles of timber driven into the bed of the river, and the rebuilding of two arches, under Henry I, cost the great sum of £25. Large ships had, therefore, to land their cargoes at Billingsgate, only fish, in small boats which could pass

under the bridge, went up to the wharves above—Paul's, Queenhithe and others, which were daily alive with traffic, the river being the main highway of London and always covered with boats.

On the further bank of the Thames lay a separate village, the South-work, where William II gave a house and a piece of land to the archbishop of Canterbury (in exchange for a better one), after which Lambeth became the home of the primate whenever he had to be in London.

Outside the city walls lay for the most part open country, green pastures on the east (Smithfield), marshy moorland on the north (Moorfields), which stretched to the beginning of the Essex forest; but outside the west gate, Ludgate, a suburb of houses already stood, which was apt to be so disorderly that the city officials took charge of it and set up a barrier (Temple Bar) to mark the limit to which their authority reached. Thieves did wisely to set their traps for travellers outside the Bar.

The inhabitants were crowded together in tiny wooden houses with thatched roofs, grouped round the different parish churches, of which there were 126 in the time of Henry II. The officers of each parish were responsible for what we should call the local government of their own district. And across the parish organisation, which was popular, lay the organisation of the Wards, larger divisions which were aristocratic. The Wards were probably at first the estates over which large landowners, Saxon thegns, had rights of justice, etc. But after the conquest the Wards gradually became the districts of special trades, the merchants of which, assembled in their gild, formed a kind of city aristocracy, though each Ward had still its chief, who kept, and still keeps, the Saxon title of *Alderman*. But there was, besides, one chief officer for the whole city, the Port-reeve, who was also the king's sheriff for London and Middlesex—that tiny shire which was the district round the city.

From the time, perhaps, of King Alfred the soldier-citizens of London had been united in a society called the Knights' gild. A similar gild existed in Canterbury even earlier. The Saxons had been fond of associating in *gilds*, chiefly for religious purposes, and other activities were naturally added. Before the conquest, men in the same business had clubbed together, in London, in gilds, at all events the Bakers and Weavers, and probably Saddlers. When the others began is not certain, but a score of others appear before 1179, such as Fishmongers, Butchers, Goldsmiths, Cordwainers (or Shoemakers), Mercers and Pepperers. The last two were importers of goods from abroad, and dealt, the one in cloth, silk, velvet, etc., and the other in spices and all kinds of foreign dainties and rarities. As they bought in gross, though they sold by retail, they came to be known as *Grossers* or Grocers.

The *gilds* were societies for mutual help in religion, in daily life and in trade. In several towns they were undoubtedly of Saxon origin, as at London, Bristol, Winchester, Oxford, York and Canterbury. In

others they sprang up during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The members met together for prayer in a particular church and often had a special altar, perhaps a special chapel, to their patron saint, for which they provided the furniture, lights and upkeep. They subscribed to a fund, from which the gild provided for the burial of a member, and for the maintenance of his widow and children. They would jointly buy goods and share them together, having the first choice themselves and selling the remainder to the public. Above all, they looked after their trade. No one outside of their gild was allowed to deal in the business, and all the members had to make and sell their goods according to the gild rules—of a particular quality, size and price. When a member died his son inherited his place in the gild. Thus a gild was a trade union, a club, and a co-operative society, a church and school organization, and an insurance and burial society, all in one.

London was so important to the welfare of the entire realm that even the Conqueror took pains to avoid injuring it, and tried to conciliate the Londoners by a charter: "William, king, greets William, bishop, and Gosfrith, port-reeve, and all the burghers within London, French and English, friendly. And I do you to wit that I will that ye be all lawworthy [free] that were in King Edward's day. And I will that every child be his father's heir, after his father's day. And I will not endure that any man offer any wrong to you. God keep you." Not that this exempted the citizens from all the penalties of conquest. The order to extinguish their lights and fires when the curfew rang at dusk was especially irksome, and Henry I pleased them by abolishing it. But the Normans took care to be masters of London. On its eastern edge the Conqueror as soon as possible (1078) began the fortress still known as the Tower of London, where he and his two sons often lived. On the western side, close to Ludgate, rose another fort called after its keeper—Baynard's Castle. The royal presence subjected the Londoners to a very disagreeable new rule, that of *purveyance*. The stewards who had to provide for the vast royal household must be served first. This meant that no sale of anything might even begin till the king's purveyors had chosen what they wanted, so that much time was wasted.

London, however, was always an exceptional place. The other towns, none of which could in the least compare with it as to size or wealth, can be characterized more generally.

It was possible to describe them less pleasantly than in the lines quoted above. An ancient tale makes a wicked Jew entice a Norman lad to Winchester, where he meant to murder him, by telling him of the dreadful drawbacks of the other cities: "Canterbury," he said, "is so thronged with pilgrims that they are dying of want in the streets; Oxford scarcely can nourish its clerks; Exeter feeds men and horses with the same corn; Bath in its sulphurous valley is as at the gates of hell; York abounds in

Scotsmen, uncleanly and untrustworthy; Worcester, Chester and Hereford are unsafe because of the reckless Welsh. In Durham, Norwich or Lincoln you will find very few of the middle classes —scarcely any one who can speak French; at Bristol everybody is a soap-boiler."

Many towns after 1066 received colonies of Frenchmen and of Jews. The former certainly helped to develop the resources of the place. Those who came in any number built themselves a new quarter, the Frank-well (*Franche ville*) of many old towns. At first they preserved their own customs, but very soon all merged together.

The first Jews were introduced by William I, who placed a colony of them at Winchester because it was the financial centre of the kingdom. The Jews were the financiers of that age, and the kings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries could not do without them. The Church had always strictly forbidden Christians to lend their money at interest, because of the scriptural condemnation of usury. So no Christian could lend money in the commercial way at all. But trade between nations made the transfer of money necessary in some better form than barrels of coin, and this the Jewish bankers (as they would now be called) understood how to do by means much like our cheques and bank-notes, and there were Jewish goldsmiths and money-lenders in every country and almost in every important town. The Church disapproved but could not hinder their business, without which, indeed, commerce would have been impossible.

There was, however, one great difficulty. As law in all law-courts proceeded under religious sanction, and as Christian forms of oath were impossible to the Jews, they could not bring their debtors to justice in case they did not deal fairly. But the Jew was not likely to venture with his wealth unprotected into a strange land, where the law regarded him as no better than a wild animal—"bearing a wolf's head." Kings, therefore, who desired Jews to settle in their country, devised the plan of treating them as royal property, outside the law, indeed, but under a special royal protection, not wholly unlike the tall deer, for they were the king's prey whenever he needed money. The interest they charged was enormous, to balance the danger of their position, and though they could not hold feudal land they could collect its profits; and they were therefore deeply unpopular. They were a necessity to the king because they alone could advance to him at one time a large sum of money which it would take several years to collect by the gradual methods of taxation; in return they were granted the yield of those taxes for a certain number of years. Their agents would collect the dues and make enough money to repay the loan and the interest on it as well. When the taxes were *farmed* in this way they were often collected oppressively, for all the agents had to make their living, and salaries were unknown. The first English settlements

of the Jews were in London and Winchester, but they soon appeared at Oxford and York, at Lincoln, Norwich, and in several seaport towns, and their number increased in the twelfth century. Henry I made a large revenue out of them, charging huge fees whether his judges helped them to recover the debts due to them or helped the debtors to escape lightly.

But the Jews came because trade was active. It is the Norman kings and barons who should be credited with that development of trade which made the little English towns grow busy and populous, and turned villages like Northampton, Norwich, or Yarmouth into towns. The English had always been a country-loving people, the Normans liked town life and valued commerce. Their constant travel between England and Normandy developed the ports of the south-east, and the principal harbours there, which had for some time before the conquest united in a league, became famous as the *Cinque Ports*. Dover, Hastings, Sandwich, Romney and Hythe were the original five, next Rye and Winchelsea joined the league, and then all the smaller ports of that coast were included, and all flourished rapidly on the Picardy and Normandy trade. Strong castles were built to defend the first three in case of invasion or rebellion, for the control of the crossing to France became with William I, what it has ever since remained, a matter of the first importance to the safety of this island.

When regular commerce with the continent began to flourish, the growth of inland towns which fed the ports was certain. Our towns may be grouped historically in several ways: according to their lords—as kings' towns, earls' and barons' towns, bishops' or abbots' towns; or in order of time of founding—distinguishing the Roman, Saxon, Norman and still later towns; or, geographically, according to their relation with the seaports, which determined their trade.

Taking the last method, we find that the traffic of London was not confined to its own river. The best way for travellers to go to Flanders was from Ipswich; to Normandy they went from Dover, or another of the Cinque Ports. Through these southern and south-eastern ports came the imports required by the new bishops, abbots, and barons, especially wine and salt, books and parchment, fine cloth and fine stone for choice work in building. From them went men and horses, provisions, and weapons for the fighting incessantly on hand in the continental possessions of the king, also tin, wool, leather and other raw material, to exchange for the wine and articles of luxury from the south. Winchester was the great centre for the traffic which went through Southampton or Portsmouth (especially wine and oil from Gascony). For Poole and Swanage, Salisbury also was a centre, the more so on account of the royal residence near-by at Clarendon, where Henry I kept his menagerie of foreign animals. At Chichester gathered the traffic for Bosham, Portsmouth, and the west Sussex havens. On the

east coast, Boston and Lynn, Norwich and Ipswich exported wool to the cloth-making towns of Flanders, as well as corn, fish, and meat; and the wool and leather markets made the business of the towns behind the ports, which collected supplies for export, especially Lincoln, Leicester, Northampton, and Nottingham.

In the inland towns merchants worked up or packed the wool they collected in the country round, and in the twelfth century half a score of processes, in both the woollen and the leather manufactures, were already separate occupations in Leicester. It was the wool and leather business of Leicester, Nottingham and Northampton which made Stamford Fair a famous mart.

The great port for the Irish trade was Bristol, where every kind of merchandise would be found, including slaves. Bishop Wulfstan conducted a kind of mission against this dreadful traffic, staying in the town for many weeks together and preaching incessantly, till at length the men of Bristol themselves forbade the traffic, though they afterwards took to it again. The Severn formed an artery of trade for timber, coals and iron, from the forests of Dean, Wyre and Salop, salt from the *wiches* and wool going to Gloucester, or further, for foreign export. Henry II declared the river free to all, and gave special privileges to Gloucester, hitherto the principal port of the West, and a town very loyal to his mother and himself. The towns of Devon and Somerset began, under Henry II, to recover some of the prosperity of Saxon times, owing to the Welsh and Irish trade.

The small ports of Yorkshire and the Tyne (Hartlepool, Whitby, Scarborough) had as yet but a small volume of commerce, for the north took long to recover from the successive devastations of Danes, Scots and Normans, but corn was exported to Norway, and the fisheries, here as all along the east coast, were the real basis of prosperity. Fish was so important an article of diet in the centuries when cattle were used chiefly for labour, and the corn crops were precarious, that it formed a universal article of trade. England even imported from the Baltic the salted fish called stockfish, much as tinned or frozen meat is imported now.

Yarmouth, founded, like Scarborough and Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the Conqueror's time, owed its existence to the herring-trade; Southampton, which first grew important under the Normans, was the harbour for the Gascony merchants, and, later, for those of Genoa and Venice. The kings encouraged Southampton and its dependency, Portsmouth, partly that they might not be wholly at the mercy of the very independent Cinque Ports, whose league monopolised and organised the entire shipping of the coast from Sandwich to Seaford.

The towns were, of course, protected by walls. Even if a suburb clustered outside a gate it was only the home of the very poor, or of bad characters who wanted to avoid the town's supervision, or of dealers and taverners who were avoiding the town dues; for

outside the walls people had to face robbers, kidnappers and the wilful destruction inflicted by a feudal soldiery on every excuse. Suburbs were constantly burnt down, as the village of Westminster had been at the Conqueror's coronation. The Norman lord of Leicester, Ivo, burnt down half the town, but Henry I condemned him to repent by going on pilgrimage to Palestine, the equivalent of a life-sentence and a terrifying example to lawless barons.

Inside the town walls people were crowded together, which made epidemics destructive. There was little privacy, and the annoyance suffered from quarrelsome or noisy neighbours caused rules in every town against "scolds," generally women, who might be put to public shame by being ducked in a pond till nearly drowned, and against "slanderers," generally men, who called a neighbour bad names.

Outside the wall would be a ditch, serving too often as a sewer and rubbish-shoot. Wall and gates were guarded at night, when no one might enter or leave the town. Strangers were always treated with suspicion, and had to find lodgings with some host who would be answerable for their good behaviour. They would probably come with merchandise for a fair, if the town had one, or for the regular market. At a fair, goods might be sold without the tolls which were charged at the market. The market was originally held in a large open space, round which grew up rows of little stalls—the shops of the future. Honesty was too rare for folks to risk their goods at a window, and windows were small, crossed with bars and kept stoutly shuttered as a rule. There was no glass yet in such house-windows, and seldom even in the stateliest churches. Nor were there likely to be chimneys. Those little wooden houses had floors of beaten earth, a hearthstone in the middle, and a hole in the roof to let the smoke out. If there was an upper storey it was a sort of loft reached by a rough ladder. The curfew was not an unwise custom, and the small towns resembled London in at least one point, for its greatest evils (says a writer of the twelfth century) were "the continual fires and the immoderate potations of fools." There, if the fire on the hearth was so bright as to be noticeable from outside, the householder was fined. The beadles of every parish kept long poles fitted with hooks for tearing down burning thatch.

The conquerors at first expected to find rebellions raised by the native population, as is shown by the keeps of stone which they built as soon as possible, in the reigns of the first three Norman kings.

York, Dover, Hastings, Rochester, Guildford, Colchester, Arundel, Nottingham, Norwich, Bristol, Oxford, Lincoln—in short, nearly all the important ancient strongholds, and the ports, and places commanding the London district, were provided with these keeps, which could neither be fired nor taken by any of the engines of attack then known.

Castles were also placed at many points which commanded the

crossings of rivers, or junctions of roads, as at Cambridge, Bridgnorth, Tickhill, Conisburgh, Lancaster, Shrewsbury. Bishops and barons by royal permission also built castles for their own protection, as at Winchester, Devizes, Salisbury, Bridgwater, Pontefract and Richmond. The last three formed a protection for new boroughs, founded by their Norman lords; and William I's New Castle on the Tyne, and William II's castle at Carlisle also caused the foundation of a town beside each. It was the royal theory that no castles should be built without royal licence, but as even the king's castles had to be placed in charge of some baron all were likely to be treated as baronial property. It was therefore the royal practice now and then to require the castellan to give up the castle to the king for a few days. If he refused, it was an act of rebellion and could be dealt with at once. If he obeyed, a royal garrison entered and could hold the place.

As a rule the townsfolk found themselves less oppressed than they had feared by these castles. There were few local riots, and when the lords began to recognize the rights of the townsmen by setting them on record in a charter, the way was open for a return to freedom. The charters always seem to imply that the king (earl, bishop, abbot, or baron, as the case might be) makes a generous gift of freedom to his *burgesses* (or men of the borough). Really, the rights mentioned were those, or only some of those which they had always in old days enjoyed, and for the lord's promise to observe them henceforth the burgesses probably subscribed to pay him a substantial sum of money.

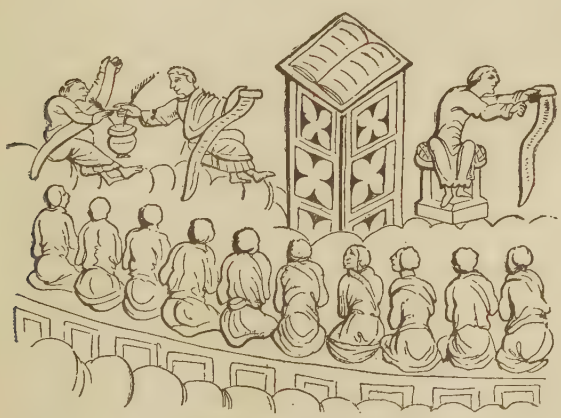
Such charters began in the time of Henry I and marked a decided step towards security and progress, for, once obtained, a charter was permanent, and could be added to whenever the lord was willing to sell fresh privileges and the town to buy them. But it was not till the time of the Angevin kings that they became common.

The progress made in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in country life and business is less easy to ascertain. The Normans were good agriculturists, and they certainly introduced into England some better kinds of apples and pears, and probably the pea and onion, planted vineyards in the south—though the wine made must have been very poor—and improved the ways of tilling and manuring the soil on their own estates. As they wanted horses for riding they paid attention to them. And the nobles and monks introduced the best methods of sheep-breeding, so that the wool "crop" became, in a century from the conquest, the most important item of national business. English dogs had always been famous and were still exported, for sale or as gifts.

Both in town and country a chief care of the kings was to discourage crime; to this end they revived the old English system of mutual guarantee. Every man was to be enrolled in a group, the members of which were jointly answerable for the action of each one. If one did wrong the rest must pay for him or make him

pay: this was called *Frank-pledge*. Henry I ordered the hundred courts to meet regularly and the Frank-pledge to be kept up, and as soon as boys grew out of childhood they had to be enrolled.

In his time, also, the lot of the villein became a little better by the labour services, which he was bound to render to his lord, being fixed in each manor. Each man's duty was put on record and his son would inherit the same duties and could not be made to do more. Some had to work for the lord two, some three, or five, days a week. Those who rendered few days might have to give more at the busy seasons of harvest. Thus the lord's crops were better attended to than those of the poor villeins themselves, who could only have odds and ends of time for their own land. The corn was still all grown on the strips in the great open field, it was not till rather later than this epoch that the lords began to get their own lands fenced or hedged in from the rest. Henry I forbade villeins to be sold, like cattle, or to be killed for slight offences. But the greatest protector of both slaves and villeins was the Church, which championed the poor by forbidding their master or creditors or the soldiery to take away the peasant's implements on any excuse whatever, saying that since without them he must starve, the taker would be held guilty of murder. The Church taught that to set slaves or villeins free was an Act of Mercy in God's sight; and this made many lords free their slaves or serfs by their wills, and sometimes in their lifetime. Bishops and abbots would even have villeins' sons taught in school, and, if they were intelligent, allow them to take Holy Orders, for the Church recognised no class distinctions; and thus it came about that the lower clergy, including most of the parish priests, were still of English race and speech, and not very different from the majority of their flocks.



School Scene, *c.* 1150.

XIV

THE ANARCHY (1135–1154) AND THE ACCESSION OF HENRY II

THE orderly development of Church and State, and of English prosperity under their protection, was dismally interrupted on the death of Henry I, when a period of anarchy set in which lasted nearly twenty years.

When a king died, "the King's Peace" died with him. His judges, sheriffs, and other officers, from the Treasurer to the humblest reeve, were no longer officers, and as the orders of government were sent out by a "king's writ" (or formal letter), while there was no king there could be no writs. The interval between the death of one king and the crowning of his successor was, therefore, a time of un-law, when hundreds of honest folk were robbed and murdered by criminals who need not fear punishment.

When Henry died "then was treason in these lands, then every man that might robbed another," says the chronicler. The terrible thing was that Stephen's coronation did not restore order, but during his entire reign "was all unpeace and evil and robbery." This was the effect of Stephen's character. While he was but count of Blois his generosity and courtesy had won golden opinions. In London, men had "weened that he should be even so as his uncle was," especially as his wife was descended from Edmund Ironside. But he squandered Henry's treasures and gave away lands and offices without winning loyalty, for "ever the more he gave to them the worse they were to him." He was an ill judge of those to trust and those to suspect. So "when the traitors perceived that he was a mild man, and soft and good and did no justice, then did they all do terrible things." The Empress Matilda, who had, as an admiring chronicler says, nothing of a woman about her, but all the courage of a knight, came to England to assert her claim to the Crown; and the feudal lords had only to play off the king against the empress, changing sides whenever they liked, to turn England into a feudal paradise, where every baron was at war with his neighbours and could do what oppression he liked without dread of justiciars. Stephen's one decisive action made things hopeless. Suspecting that Bishop Roger of Salisbury was meditating joining Matilda, he suddenly seized him and his nephews, without providing for their great department,

the Exchequer, whereupon what machinery of government had still been working promptly stopped. The baronage, says the chronicler, "oppressed greatly the wretched men of the land with the making of castles; when the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they seized those men, who they supposed had any possessions, both by night and by day, men and women, and put them into prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with unspeakable tortures. . . . It lasted the nineteen winters while Stephen was king and ever it was worse and worse. They laid gelds on the villages from time to time and called it 'Tenserie.' When the wretched men had no more to give they robbed and burned all the villages so that you might well go a whole day's journey and you would never find a man occupying a village or land being tilled. Then was corn dear and meat and cheese and butter, because there was none in the land. Wretched men starved for hunger; some went seeking alms who at one time were rich men; others fled out of the land . . . if two or three men came riding to a village all the township fled before them, supposing them to be robbers." At first the unhappy people would drive their beasts into the churchyards and stow their money in the church, thinking to find sanctuary, but the soldiery laid hands on all and too often "burnt the church and all together," for they scoffed at the efforts of the bishops and clergy to restrain them. Even the earth seemed to be accursed, for what corn was sown would not grow, "for the land was all ruined by such deeds, and they said openly that Christ and his saints were asleep."

The war between Stephen and the Empress Matilda was only a part cause of these horrors; it was waged mostly in the south and east. But Matilda's principal helpers were her half-brother Robert, earl of Gloucester, and her uncle, King David of Scotland; and the latter made his niece's cause an excuse for raids into England. The nobility of the southern part of Scotland were either of English race or Normans or Flemings who had become friends of the king during his earlier life, while he was earl of Cumbria. They had accepted estates from David and were unwilling to fight against him, but the Scottish king would not listen to their attempts to make a peace, and, after plundering and burning as far as the Tees, marched into Yorkshire. His cruel progress was barred on Allerton Moor by the efforts of the Archbishop of York and his clergy. They had gathered the fyrd and placed it under the command of an old warrior, Walter l'Espec, the same who first brought Cistercians into Yorkshire, and these were joined by a body of Derbyshire archers under Ferrars. The clergy had fixed to the mast of a ship the banners of the three great saints of their churches—St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley and St. Wilfrid of Ripon—and set them on a cart to be the rallying-point of the army. Beside it a bishop blessed the troops and the clergy prayed while l'Espec drew up his men on foot, groups of knights with lances, of axe-men, and of

yeomen archers between them. The bow was a favourite weapon of the English Danes, and they had by this time developed it into a long and powerful bow which shot a long arrow. As the Scottish vanguard rushed forward the archers shot them down so fast that the ranks were broken, confusion resulted, the knights charged in, and only a score of David's two hundred knights escaped. This battle of the Standard (1138) was the first victory won in England by archers and foot-soldiers.

If the churchmen of Yorkshire saved their country from invasion, in the south the churchmen overturned Stephen's unstable throne and offered the crown to Matilda. Stephen's brother Henry was bishop of Winchester and had obtained an appointment from the pope as Legate, thus overriding the authority of the archbishop of Canterbury, in spite of papal pledges that the latter should be the Legate whenever one was needed. When Stephen laid hands on Bishop Roger and his nephews, the bishops of Ely and Lincoln, Henry of Winchester, as Legate, called a synod which assumed authority to judge the king and flatly denied his right to inflict any kind of punishment on a bishop. The bishops threw their influence on to the side of the empress, who entered London in triumph. But she had the folly to refuse to the citizens the now usual royal promise to give them "the laws of King Edward." They flew to arms, and poured out of the city towards Westminster to attack her in the palace. Matilda fled to Oxford, and London declared for Stephen (1141) and admitted his queen.

But neither these events, nor the battle of Lincoln (1141) in which Stephen was taken prisoner, nor the siege of Oxford, which drove Matilda to Gloucester, nor the death of Earl Robert, after which she left England in despair, made any end of the misery of the people. Stephen hired large forces of Brabant or Flemish troops, and they and the barons plundered the country round the Thames and the lower Severn till men had to live on wild fruits and roots. The east was terrorised by the castles of the ferocious Geoffrey de Mandeville, who actually, for some time, held the Tower of London.

The first sign of respite came when St. Bernard preached the (Second) Crusade in 1147, and a number of English soldiers and adventurers set out for the Holy War. England was relieved by their departing and their help was useful to King Alfonso of Portugal in his struggle against the Moors at Lisbon.

But it was Archbishop Theobald who at length (1153) opened the road to peace in England. The empress's son, Henry of Anjou, was then a young man of nineteen, and as count of Anjou and duke of Normandy, and husband of Eleanor, heiress of the great duchy of Aquitaine, he was a powerful sovereign. Theobald was convinced that Henry was a wiser and abler man than Stephen's son Eustace. He moved the clergy to support Henry's claim to the Crown, induced the pope to forbid any bishop to crown Prince Eustace, and finally succeeded in making the Treaty of Wallingford

between Stephen and Duke Henry (1153). Stephen was to rule while he lived, but he recognised Henry as his heir; in the meantime the mercenaries were to be dismissed, castles pulled down and order restored.

The churchmen formed the only united body in the kingdom and they alone had a definite policy, and when, a year later, Stephen died, the archbishop was able to keep the country quiet for several months and ensure the carrying out of the treaty as soon as Henry would come to London to be crowned (1154).

Henry II, called Plantagenet (a nickname given to his father, Geoffrey of Anjou) quickly began to carry out the provisions of the Treaty of Wallingford. Stephen's Flemish guards were sent home, his grants cancelled, and the new castles pulled down, or garrisoned for the Crown. A rapid campaign in the north, in which the archbishop joined, redeemed Yorkshire from the tyranny of the count of Aumâle (or Albemarle), who had ruled from Scarborough, and Cheshire and Lancashire from that of the earl of Chester. The young king of Scots was menaced and without fighting consented to give up the acquisitions of David—Cumberland and Northumberland—which then became English once more. Henry then confirmed to him the earldom of Huntingdon (inherited from Waltheof's daughter) and for it the Scottish king did homage, just as Henry himself had done homage to the king of France for Normandy.

The Empress Matilda had been well content to stand aside for her eldest son, and for many years she successfully ruled Normandy for him. Her epitaph described her as—

> Of Henry daughter, wife and mother:
> great by birth, greater by marriage, but
> greatest by motherhood.

XV

WALES DURING THE SAXON AND NORMAN EPOCHS

After the first onslaughts of the Saxons and Angles the British tribes of the west, between the Firth of Clyde and the Severn sea, found themselves isolated from the rest of the civilised world excepting Ireland, a country which lay even further apart from the general life of Europe. These western tribes had always been the least romanised part of the population, and so they soon ceased to preserve any of the material civilisation of their late masters; although, on the other hand, they did preserve and develop the Christian religion and relinquished their pagan deities.

They continued to live in their native tribes. The Roman towns shrank and vanished; the same name—Caer-leon or -leol (*castrum legionis*)—served for the empty fortifications of Carlisle, Chester and Caerleon-on-Usk. Even the arts of road-making and building in masonry were forgotten. The people lived in wooden or wattled houses; the rich, the chiefs, or the monastics merely multiplied the number of their huts and surrounded them by a substantial fence; this formed the *llan* (enclosure) of the abbey or the princely court.

After the heroic, if mythical, age of Ambrosius Aurelianus, Arthur and Maelgwyn, came a quieter time, when the Welsh tribes, separated from the encroaching English by a wide belt of deserted territory, overgrown with forest, settled down in the moor and mountain country. From the estuary of the Severn to that of the Clyde they formed a kind of confederation; the tribal system prevented a union in one state, but often one of the kings was acknowledged as paramount chief, and the entire region was the land of the Cymry.

The tribes of "West Wales," however, that is, Cornwall and Devon, being cut off from the rest could not long preserve their independence, and were gradually overcome by the West Saxons; Devon becoming more English than Cornwall, as is shown by its early existence as a *shire*, while Cornwall long remained a royal domain (after the Norman Conquest an earldom).

The Cymry, as a whole, retained much the same religious, social and political conditions for centuries. The people fell into three classes, free, unfree and slaves. The freemen dwelt in their separate homes, scattered in the woods, each family as much in private as possible, and the father directed the family estate. Their farms

were tilled by slave labour, which permitted the freemen to spend most of their time in warfare or hunting. The slaves were captives obtained in forays, or purchased from the Irish slave merchants. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, Bristol and Chester were well-known slave markets.

Besides the slaves and their free-born masters there was a large class of unfree peasants, dwelling in hamlets of their own, which they were forbidden to leave. Their special work was agriculture. Their heavy wooden ploughs were drawn by eight oxen, which they clubbed together to supply. Their cattle went out to pasture in one herd under a herdsman, whose trained dog was rated as worth a good ox. Their land and its produce was held and shared in common, and thus, as no individual could gain by his own work, there was little incentive to effort or intelligence. The unfree might not hunt or hawk, could not become clergy, bards, warriors, or smiths. It followed that agriculture came to be looked down on. Hunting, fishing and cattle-breeding were preferred by the free men to tillage, and this less civilising mode of life became permanent. Wealth was reckoned in cattle, which became the chief objects of greed. Booty which could travel on its own feet stimulated robbery and feuds, and the inter-tribal jealousies, which had characterised the Britons in the Roman age, were cherished among the Welsh freemen and their princes.

The district belonging to a servile hamlet was called a *tref ;* then the same term was given to a group of free halls or farms; the tref was the unit of organisation and a group of trefs made up a cantref. This was the unit for judicial meetings, when the heads of the free households made up a court to hear law-suits and do justice. The chiefs of the tribes were numerous and most of them were called kings. Their authority was limited, especially in South Wales, by the consent or criticism of the heads of the free households. But the king was the leader in war, the president in the law-meetings and the patron of the bards, who often lived at his court and were really the educators and historians of the laity. The king and his household were maintained by a render of food paid by every cantref. The Welsh law, like that of the Saxons, imposed payment to atone for injuries done, and grouped its free trefs and their population in nominal hundreds.

The principal kingdoms were Gwynedd or North Wales, Powys or Central Wales, and Deheubarth, the south-west; but the kings of Gwynedd, having more authority, usually had the best-trained war bands, and sometimes a fleet also, and often made themselves the overlords of the others; while in Deheubarth the free men asserted so much individual " liberty " that the little kingdom early fell to pieces and became so much depopulated that it was afterwards colonised from abroad, and so was in the end less Welsh than the north.

The first disaster which befell the Cymry came at the hands of

the Northumbrian King Ethelfrith. At the beginning of the seventh century he led his army westwards, and defeated the Welsh in a pitched battle outside Chester (614). This seems to have resulted in a withdrawal of the Welsh from the Cheshire plains, which remained almost empty for a season and became forest. His successors, Edwin, Oswald and Oswy, on the whole maintained their advantage, and English settlers came into the South Lancashire region, along the old Roman ways in the river valleys of the Ribble and Calder, or over the moors from Dore, while Mercians began to colonise the Cheshire plain. Thus the Cymry found themselves separated into two countries, Wales proper and Strathclyde, lying north of the Ribble estuary and gradually shrinking northwards.

In order to make head against these encroaching Northumbrians, King Cadwallon allied with the Mercian king, Penda, and jointly with him defeated, first, Edwin, at the battle of the Heathfield, and then Oswald, at that of the Maserfield. But neither these victories nor the recovery of Oswy's treasure hoard (which had been originally plunder taken from the British themselves), could recover the lost territory, and the brèach made between the two Celtic principalities became permanent. Strathclyde was bound to break up, and to become, the northern part, Scottish, the southern, English, Danish and Norman, so that only Wales proper remained Welsh.

The population of Wales, continually fighting the Saxons or one another, was scanty, and hated the English so much that the Welsh preferred to withdraw from the level country rather than mix with them. An abbot is recorded to have migrated with all his monks because one day he heard a Saxon on the further side of Severn hallooing to his dog. The increasing population of Mercia, therefore, had an easy task in colonising westward, and in the eighth century they were established at Hereford and along a frontier thence by Wenlock to Chester. Their great King Offa built a huge dyke, or perhaps linked together stretches of older Welsh dykes, to make a frontier mark. *Offa's Dyke* was thenceforward the boundary line between Wales and England, for the English did not care to push into the mountains, which were a sufficient protection for the Welsh.

During the ninth century the plundering Danes, who drew off the whole attention and strength of the English, whether in north or south, seldom cared to attack poor and barren Wales. But when the Norway vikings had settled in Dublin they sometimes raided the coast, and, later, made settlements by good harbours. Anglesey (Strait island), Milf[i]ord, Haverf[i]ord, Swansea (Sweyn's island) are Norse names.

During this time, a new line of kings was founded, about 825, by one Mervyn from the Isle of Man (probably), whose son Rhodri Mawr, or Roderic the Great (844–888), made himself king of all

Wales. His sons found themselves between the Danes and King Alfred, and, seeing that Alfred was a much better ally than the Danish king of York, they recognised the supremacy of the king of Wessex, and for several generations peace reigned between Wales and England, and a friendly intercourse of churchmen took place. Alfred's chaplain and biographer, Asser, came from St. David's. Howel the Good (Hywel Dda), Rhodri's grandson, also acknowledged the overlordship of the successors of Alfred, and imitated that king by making a journey to Rome, by encouraging the spread of learning in his own territory, and by making a famous code of laws out of the ancient customs of Wales. His influence kept the Welsh princes at peace, and several of them visited the court of Athelstan, Edmund, or Edgar. Welsh princes were present at the famous court held by Edgar at Chester.

But after Howel's death in 950, and Edgar's in 975, Wales relapsed for a century into her incessant feuds, nor were the kings of England able to pay much attention to Wales, except when border raids on a large scale compelled them to retaliate.

But in the days of Edward the Confessor, North Wales and Powys fell under the rule of a prince of great force and daring, Griffith ap Llewelyn. He not only made himself master of all Wales, by killing off all who might or did oppose him, but carried out sweeping attacks on the English from Flint to Herefordshire, such as compelled them to evacuate lands which they had been occupying for generations. The rivalry between the houses of Leofric and Godwine gave Griffith an opportunity which he made the most of, allying with Elfgar and engaging Irish and Danish pirates to attack Harold's earldoms. When King Edward sent Ralph the Timid to Hereford as earl, he was severely defeated, and Harold was then obliged to leave the lost valleys to Griffith.

His overthrow was accomplished later by Harold, who devised the only successful method of fighting the Welsh. He raised a body of lightly armed troops, able to travel in the mountains; these he took on ships round the coast, overawing the southern chiefs into submission; then he landed in North Wales and attacked Griffith in the national refuge, the Snowdon country, while Earl Tostig, coming in from the north, occupied the lowlands with his mounted troops. Griffith was thus cooped up in the barren hills, and his men, in disgust, turned against him, slew him, and sent his head to Harold as a peace-offering. The English acclaimed Harold as a conqueror, and the Welsh made Griffith into a national hero.

But the coming of the Normans menaced Welsh independence more seriously than Harold's campaigns. The kings saw in the Welsh borderland an admirable field for baronial enterprise. Harrying the Welsh would injure neither the English nor the king, but extend the kingdom and at the same time satisfy the warriors. William I gave the earldom of Hereford as a reward to his most trusted follower, William Fitzosbern of Breteuil, whose sons held

Shrewsbury and Montgomery, and Fitzosbern built a series of castles from Chepstow to Wigmore, whose garrisons were more than a match for the light Welsh troops, while the little towns which he founded in their shelter became each a nucleus for colonists. Monmouth and Chepstow became prosperous centres of trade, and from them the old earl extended his sway over the fertile district of Gwent. He did not, however, drive away the Welsh; so long as they would become law-abiding farmers they could stay. The princes saw that resistance was hopeless, and when, in 1081, the Conqueror himself marched to St. David's, the principal king, Rhys ap Tudor, became his vassal and rendered tribute in return for the royal protection.

Upon the death of Rhys ap Tudor (1093) the Norman penetration of South Wales proceeded more rapidly. The lordships of Pembroke, Glamorgan, Gower, Brecon, etc., replace the old Welsh names. After Fitzosbern's death his sons, like the sons of many of the Conqueror's first vassals, tried their luck in rebellion and lost their fiefs. Their great estates were then broken up and distributed to new holders, and so the houses of Mortimer, de Lacy, Clare and Clifford established themselves on the borders, or *Marches*. What they could conquer they might keep, and they soon broke through to the sea, dotted the coast and the river valleys with their little castles, or shell-keeps, from Cardigan round to Cardiff and up the Wye and the Usk. Pembroke was the most famous of them, because it was never taken by the Welsh, but even if Cardiff or Kidwelly were burnt, the castle always rose stronger next time.

Owing to their own incessant feuds the Welsh population had decreased, and Henry I thought Pembroke a good district in which to settle a colony of Flemish immigrants. Some were farmers and cloth-weavers, and they proved good colonists, who mixed rather with the Anglo-Norman garrisons than with the Welsh. In the time of Henry II, parties of Stephen's Flemish mercenaries also settled there. A few places in Pembroke still keep some of their names (*e. g.* Lamberston is Lamberts-town), but in the end Pembroke became completely English; "little England beyond Wales" was its nickname.

In the meantime attempts were made to conquer North Wales from Shrewsbury and Chester, and, under the powerful earl of Chester, Hugh the Fat, and the earl of Shrewsbury, Hugh the Proud, they seemed at first successful. But the earls had not enough colonists to occupy the territory; the Welsh made descents on the coast castles from their lair in Anglesey, and after the castellan of Rhuddlan had been seized and slain on Orme's Head, and the earl of Shrewsbury shot down on the sea-shore by a viking king of Norway who chanced to be out ravaging, the Normans gave up the vain attempt to reduce North Wales by campaigns alone.

The barons of the Marches from Montgomery to Pembroke ruled over both Anglo-Normans and Welshmen; and when their quarrels

with each other or with the king gave them excuse for warring, which was not seldom, they were perfectly ready to enlist Welshmen against their English neighbours. This produced uneasy conditions in the Marches but helped to save much of Welsh individuality and freedom. The warlike barons also introduced the monks of the new orders, and at Chepstow, Cardiff, Monmouth, Abergavenny, and elsewhere, borough and priory grew up in the shadow of the castle, while the ascetic canons of Llanthony founded in the wilderness one of the famous houses of the kingdom, and Neath became a renowned Cistercian priory.

Henry I maintained carefully the royal hold over the Lords Marchers; his able son Robert, earl of Gloucester, the lord of Bristol, held also Glamorgan and Cardiff, while another trusty baron, Miles of Gloucester, held that city and Brecon, so that the Severn estuary was secure.

A further hold on Wales was secured by the recognition of the authority of Canterbury by its bishops, who had not, hitherto, owned any primacy in their own or the English episcopate, though they had often resorted to Canterbury or York for consecration. And the archbishops exerted their influence to raise the standard of religious life and teaching in South Wales, and to turn the somewhat disorderly "clas" (or chapter) into a monastic community keeping a regular Rule.

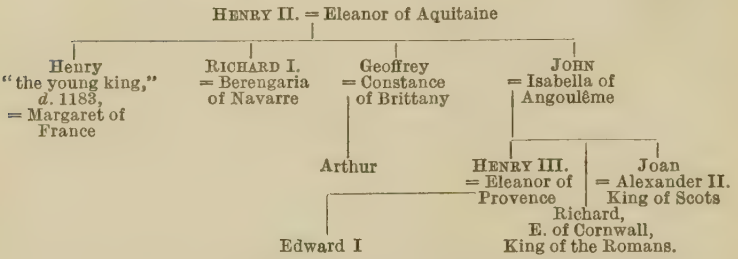
One of the principal writers of the time of Henry II was a born Welshman, Gerald, or Giraldus Cambrensis, who wrote as if the descendants of all the different settlers were Welsh.

XVI

ENGLAND PART OF A CONTINENTAL "EMPIRE" (1154–1216)

Henry II. .	Dec. 1154–July 1189
Richard I. .	July 1189–April 1199
John . .	May 1199–Oct. 1216
Henry III. .	Oct. 1216–Nov. 1272

THE EARLY PLANTAGENETS


HENRY II. = Eleanor of Aquitaine
Henry "the young king," d. 1183, = Margaret of France
RICHARD I. = Berengaria of Navarre
Geoffrey = Constance of Brittany
JOHN = Isabella of Angoulême
Arthur
HENRY III. = Eleanor of Provence
Joan = Alexander II. King of Scots
Edward I
Richard, E. of Cornwall, King of the Romans.

FOR sixty years, under the first three Plantagenet (or Angevin) kings, England found herself in a new and strange position, as one of a bundle of states united only under the sceptre of sovereigns whose interests were more continental than English.

Henry II inherited: (1) from his father, the counties of Anjou and Touraine; (2) from his mother, Matilda, and her father, Henry I, the duchy of Normandy, with the county of Maine, and the kingdom of England; and his wife brought to him (3) the great duchy of Aquitaine, including Gascony, Guienne, Poitou and other fiefs, as well as claims of suzerainty over other counties between the Loire and Provence. He had acquired all these dominions before he was twenty, and he possessed the genius and strength to keep and rule them and pass them on to his sons. For all, except England, he was the vassal of the French king.

Henry II was a powerfully-built man of medium height, with reddish hair and complexion, and very bright, grey eyes which glowed like fire when he was angry. He cared little for luxury or show, but cropped his hair very short, ate sparingly and dressed plainly. Usually he wore a short cloak over his shoulders, instead of the long fur-lined robe of the Anglo-Normans, whence his nickname, Henry Curtmantel. He was extraordinarily strong and active

and wore out his attendants, for he was always on his feet or in the saddle, except when he was actually at meals or playing chess—the favourite game of the time. He was a man of great sagacity, a most able organiser, financier and soldier. He possessed an unfailing memory and understood several languages; his different subjects could speak to him each in his own tongue. He valued his servants for their efficiency and talents, trusting fully those of proved loyalty, whom he never neglected; but he never forgave treachery. Learned and witty men found a warm welcome at his court, for he loved to hear clever talk. Fiery-tempered and quick as he was, he nevertheless could be patient in the judgment-seat and merciful to the miserable; he was probably the first sovereign to forbid the horrible custom of murdering shipwrecked crews. But he was furious if his decision was disputed, or if trickery was tried against his just claims. At such times a fit of ungovernable rage would seize him, so terrible that his servants fled from his presence. There was a legend that an ancestor of the Angevin Counts had wedded a beautiful strange maiden, who proved to be a demon in human form. She it was who had bequeathed to the race this fierce temper which in all of them was apt to explode in bursts of half-insane fury. "They come from the devil, and to the devil they will go," the terrified people would mutter.

In his tireless energy Henry would mix fun with work; a hunt in a royal forest would land him at some town or castle, where he would set up his court of justice on the spot and ask for complaints and testimony; and while the sheriff or castellan was answering his questions the royal suite had to find makeshift quarters. Or he would give a hint with a rough joke: a bishop of Chichester, in the course of a trial, affirming that the secular authority could not interfere with spiritual authorities, or depose any ecclesiastic: "True enough," shouted the king, mirthfully; "he cannot be deposed, but he may be clean thrust out by a shove like this," and he suddenly hurled the bishop aside. But when the prelate took not the hint but proceeded to more active defiance of royal authority, he was promptly crushed into submission.

On the other hand, he would bear much from an upright man. When Hugh, the famous bishop of Lincoln, had broken the royal rule by excommunicating a royal servant and had refused, also, to give a cathedral stall to a courtier, Henry's wrath was turned aside by the saintly bishop's fearlessness and quick jest. The king refused to speak to him or notice his presence. The bishop waited quietly. The king was sitting under a tree, stitching a bit of bandage round his cut finger, and after a while—"How like you are now to your cousins of Falaise," observed Hugh. (Falaise, a glove-making town, was the home of the Conqueror's low-born mother.) The king broke into a roar of laughter, rolling on the ground in his delight; his wrath vanished, and, listening to the bishop's explanations, he gave in to him entirely.

Though Henry hardly spent a quarter of his time in England, and Richard visited it only for six months out of his ten years' reign, yet England, being their principal and only independent realm, was more important in their eyes than her size and wealth and population might have warranted. If England was to produce revenue she must be well administered, and both kings kept excellent justiciars and ministers in office for long periods—Richard de Lucy was justiciar for twenty-five years, and then Ranulf Glanville for ten. Thus the nation became accustomed to steady government, while some of the methods adopted had a great effect not only in maintaining order but also in moulding national habit. In particular, the judges of the Curia Regis and the Exchequer kept up permanent law-courts in London; visitations of the local law-courts by royal judges became a part of the legal system, and the law as decided by the judges became the basis of the Common Law of England "called so because it is given to All in Common"—and the basis, therefore, of the Law of Canada, Australia, and the United States to-day.

Especially important was the adoption of *Scutage* (shield-money) as a system. The old land-tax, danegeld, brought in less and less, and Henry ceased to use it, but distributed the burden among all the landowners, including the clergy. When the military tenants-in-chief brought their troops, other landholders had to pay. As time went on this system was extended. It relieved the bishops and abbots and sometimes the barons from the burden of maintaining soldiers, while it enabled the king to hire troops more reliable than the feudal levy, which was only bound to serve for forty days at a time, while the paid troops were professional soldiers, fought better, served steadily, and were more loyal.

Another sweeping change was also begun by a method of taxation. Towards the close of Henry's reign it became clear to the king and his ministers that many men who were not landholders had wealth. When the Third Crusade was being preached, Henry, like nearly all the potentates of Europe, was stirred by a desire to help the Christian cause in Palestine by preparing an army to march to Jerusalem, and he imposed, for this purpose, a tax on *moveables*. That is, on men's stock-in-trade—wool, leather, wine, corn, etc.; on their animals, utensils, and household goods, and the contents of their shops and farms. This (called the *Saladin tithe*) was of course unpopular, but it was fair that well-to-do merchants, artisans and villeins should pay their share. Not very much was obtained at first, nor in the reign of Richard I, when the expedient was again tried, for men easily contrived to cheat or to bribe the tax-gatherers, but the tax was not relinquished and in time became regularly granted and assessed. The sum was invariably supposed to be a "tenth" (or a "ninth," or a "fifteenth," etc.) of a man's personal property. In those days gold chains, jewelled gowns, inlaid armour, and costly bits of furniture were really of the nature of

money-boxes, while the stocks of merchants and farmers were the proof that they were making good incomes.

Another change, and one much welcomed, was the royal order (called the Great Assize) that certain kinds of law-suits, about land, should be tried by the judges making an inquest

BUILDERS AT WORK.
(From an Eleventh-century Miniature.)

from a jury of twelve who knew the truth (witnesses to be cross-questioned, in fact), instead of by the old Norman ordeal by battle; this was an exchange of force or chance for justice, which was afterwards extended to many other cases, and meant greater permanence when decisions were once given.

The effect on England of her partnership with great continental countries was to stimulate the development already begun by the

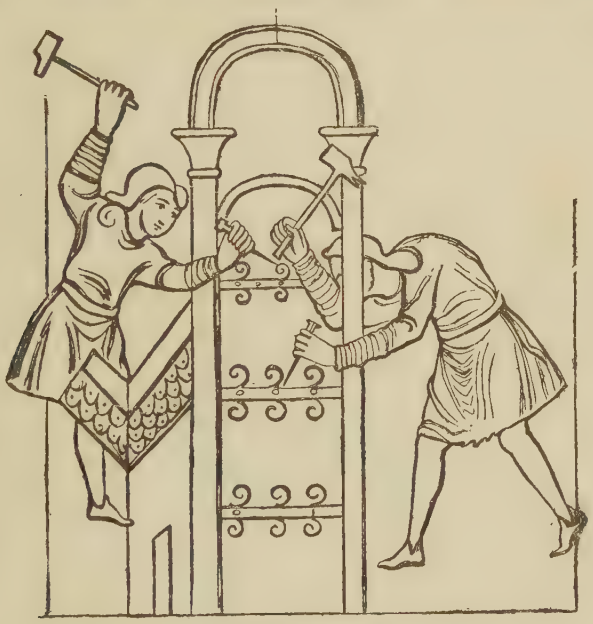
Normans in intellectual, commercial and naval life, and to introduce to her a new series of ideas about foreign nations which we might call the idea of Foreign Policy.

(1) In the first place all forms of mental activity were stimulated by the intellectual energy of the king and his court, and by the coming and going of many talented men—bishops and clergy, ministers and officials, ambassadors, teachers, merchants, lawyers—from Henry's different dominions and from those, also, of his connections and friends, viz., the Norman rulers of Sicily and South Italy, and the Angevin king of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem (the feudal, Christian kingdom established by the First Crusade). All kinds of knowledge thus came to London, Winchester or Oxford, and through the gates of the Cinque Ports or of Porchester, Southampton or Bristol, while the barons or clerks who journeyed about with the king could not help bringing back with them, to Yorkshire or Shropshire, Gloucestershire or Norfolk, all kinds of news and suggestions which stirred men to think and to experiment.

(2) A sign that England was joining in the mental awakening of Europe is the eminence of her great schools, and, especially, the more complete establishment of the University of Oxford. At some time in the twelfth century it became organised, apparently on the pattern of the University of Paris, to which English students always flocked; and the quarrel of Henry II with the French king probably kept many students in England, as they were forbidden to go abroad. Oxford was frequented, also, by Welsh, Irish, and even Scottish students, and control over the Masters of Arts and the students was exercised by a Chancellor, the official of the bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese Oxford lay, for the university (or Place of Universal Studies) was, like the great schools of the towns, a child of the Church. Here Henry II sometimes came to his grandfather's palace, or to his own favourite hunting park at Woodstock, famous for the romance of Fair Rosamond, and his court was full of learned and brilliant men, some of whom, Gerald of Wales and Walter Map the satirist, wrote famous books. "With the king of England there is school every day," boasted one scholar. When Gerald of Wales, having written a book relating his explorations in Ireland, wished to make it known—equivalent to our "publishing"—he recited it on three successive days at Oxford, to all masters and students who would come to listen, and on each day he entertained his audience at dinner. In the first years of the thirteenth century a migration of students to Cambridge laid the foundation of a second university, while a third expedition in 1238 made Salisbury also a centre of advanced studies for a century.

The episcopal schools, especially those of Canterbury, York and London, were also full of learned men and their pupils; the city of London contained at least four grammar schools.

(3) The highway connecting the different parts of Henry's dominions was the sea, and the Channel became an Anglo-Norman lake, covered with small but seaworthy ships from both coasts. With Guienne our southern ports now drove a lively trade, taking to her populous cities supplies of raw material to work up, hides, wool, or tin, and bringing back salt—more easily fetched oversea than overland from Cheshire—as well as oil, wood, elegant apparel and luxuries, but especially wine, which was eagerly desired by all persons of wealth and good standing, instead of the thick ale or sour



IRON-WORKERS.

cider of local brewing. To Normandy England exported provisions, and especially cheeses which were so firm and pure that Matilda de Braose, when her husband rebelled against John, boasted that her castle could defy a hundred of the best men of England, for if stones for the stone-hurling machines gave out she had stored cheeses enough to last for a month instead.

(4) But a new sentiment also made itself felt among the administrators around Henry II, and from them began to penetrate among the more educated classes of the nation, a sentiment which may be called political. Henry found himself by force of circumstances everywhere continually in opposition to the king of France, who was, however, his feudal overlord. It was impossible that the

ruler of France should find his domains shut out from the sea by those of one powerful vassal without scheming to alter the position. But the king of France at that time only ruled the Île de France (the land round Paris) in actual sovereignty such as the king of England possessed in England; over the rest of his kingdom he was but a feudal suzerain and his vassals of Normandy or Provence or Aquitaine might easily be as powerful as himself. Now that the duke of Normandy was also duke of Aquitaine and king of an independent island he was far stronger than Louis VII. The kingdom of France, then, could only grow at the expense of the dukes of Aquitaine and Normandy, who were also English kings. Hence the efforts of Henry II were directed towards maintaining his commanding position in France, and those of Louis VII and his wise son Philip Augustus (1180–1223) towards reducing it.

This meant a study of the relations of other rulers towards the French king, and caused not only the English monarchs but their ministers and bishops and lords, their merchants and skippers, to become acquainted with the views of the emperor, the count of Flanders, the pope, the cities of North Italy, the kings of Sicily or Castile. If the cities of Flanders were in revolt against their count, or those of Italy at war with the emperor, they would be friends or foes according to the alliances of those sovereigns with France or England. If there were friendship it meant large cargoes and willing help, but if enmity, English merchants, sailors and messengers, English monks or bishops travelling to Rome, English students at Bologna or Paris, would find themselves all of a sudden seized in the streets, beaten and haled to prison and their ships, or their lodgings, plundered. Or they might be excommunicated by a papal agent or a politically-minded bishop, and then they would be shunned by every one and helpless in a foreign land. The "boycotting" of those days was thorough and meant ruin and starvation.

It therefore was urgent for ordinary English traders, wool farmers, clergy and monks to keep up with "political" changes, and this they were able to do owing to the constant going to and fro of shipping bearing all kinds of passengers—pilgrims and scholars as well as Jewish bankers, ecclesiastical messengers, and crowds of traders and of military men. While there was little writing (and that of course in Latin, the universal tongue of Europe) there was much talk and little secrecy. People had no private rooms in inns or cabins on board ship.

This opposition of the English king to the king of France created a new situation. From the days of St. Augustine to those of Anselm, northern France had been our source of inspiration and teaching. The main road to Italy and Rome was the route by Paris and the Seine into Burgundy, via Dijon, so that travellers to Rome made acquaintance with the French monasteries and schools and the rich self-governing towns, which were so much larger and grander

than those of England. It was the customs of the Norman and French towns which were imitated in the English ones when, during the twelfth century, so many of them obtained from the king, or from the feudal lord who held them, charters to put on record their rights. The League of the Cinque Ports was inspired by the towns of Picardy, then a part of Flanders.

The very language ordinarily spoken in polite society was French, and continued to be so till the time of Edward III, or even Henry IV, just as the language of churchmen was Latin. The law-courts and government used both Latin and French, so that there were two tongues for the better classes, while English remained until the thirteenth century only the spoken dialect of the poor. But from the time of Henry II a gradual change set in. The influence of northern France was modified by the connection with southern France, and with Sicily, Italy and Spain, and travellers to the Mediterranean or to Rome could now go most of the way through Henry's own dominions, from the Normandy ports to Angers or Le Mans, Tours, Poitiers, Cahors, Narbonne and the Riviera.

Henry II was too powerful to need foreign alliances, and had too much respect for his feudal allegiance to attack his suzerain the king of France personally, though both Louis VII and Philip Augustus frequently made war upon him. He even withdrew from the siege of Toulouse (1159) when King Louis threw himself into the city to help the count, because he would not break his feudal oath.

His wars were principally fought in France and affected the English very little, except once, in 1173, when some of the nobles joined in the rebellion of the royal princes. But under Richard I, and still more under John, the rivalry between the English and French crowns began to develop into a commercial and national antagonism which produced wider effects in succeeding centuries.

Much more commotion was caused, in Henry's reign, by a contest begun between the Crown and the Church. The king's quarrel with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, in fact created a tradition in English political life which was to persist, on the whole, till the time of Henry VIII.

XVII

STRIFE BETWEEN STATE AND CHURCH—HENRY II

It was certain that a conflict must come between the royal government and the rulers of the Church, which had been made by the Conqueror a self-governing body distinct from the rest of the nation. Nor was the Church (meaning clergy and monks) simply a separate class within the nation; it was a part of a great European organisation whose head was a foreigner in a foreign land, and whose aims might very likely have nothing to do with English interests at all.

Already Henry I and Anselm had had a long struggle over investitures, only closed by their own wisdom and unselfishness. But the question over which Henry II and Archbishop Thomas à Becket quarrelled could not be brought to any compromise, and it continued to be a cause of strife till the sixteenth century. It was the difficulty created by the existence of a separate system of Church (Canon) Law, and by the pope's continual interference with Englishmen by means of the ecclesiastical legal system.

The career of Thomas Becket is typical of his times.

His father was a Rouen merchant who had settled in London and lived in Cheapside, a man of sufficient wealth and standing to hold the office of Port-reeve.

Young Thomas was educated first in London and afterwards at the University of Paris. When he came home he began a business career in the house of a young knight of London, formerly a schoolfellow. Thomas acted as a kind of secretary, but he also practised knightly sports and ways of warfare. It was a usual mode of education, up to the sixteenth century, to place a lad in a friend's household that he might both make himself useful and acquire the habits and knowledge of his patron's profession; and Thomas soon moved into the house of a great London merchant, Osbert Huitdeniers or Eightpenny, and from his service, first, to that of the bishop of London, then to that of Archbishop Theobald. He now took minor orders in the Church and was provided for by his ecclesiastical superiors in the manner which Rome had recently introduced. It was no longer thought necessary for a rector or a canon to live in his parish or attend at his cathedral, nor need he be a priest nor even a deacon to enjoy church preferment. Thomas, though really a lawyer or secretary, was given two rectories and two

canon's stalls. The duties would be discharged, as meagrely as possible, by some deputy at a small salary, Canon Thomas being free to attend the archbishop in England or France, and even to go to Italy to study law at the great school of Bologna.

When he came home he was in deacon's orders, and the archbishop promoted him to be archdeacon of Canterbury. This meant that he would supervise most of the archbishop's business—his vast landed property, the appeals at law made to him, his political letters, the patronage of church offices and many other matters. Only a very able man could manage so much work.

When Henry II became king he applied to the archbishop to find the right man to be his English Chancellor (that is, his public and private secretary), and Theobald selected Becket, a man who knew London and the south of England well and was acquainted with the politics of France and the papacy, and of the English bishops and barons. Becket was, moreover, an attractive, energetic man, young enough to be ready always to attend the restless king, a tireless worker and a good companion, ready for a knightly joust or the rough practical jokes which were that age's form of humour.

Henry quickly gave his confidence to his chancellor, heaped on him wealth and favours, and for eight years treated him as almost his second self. He was so wealthy that he brought nearly two hundred knights, with their attendants, to the royal army.

When Archbishop Theobald died, the king invited the chapter to elect the chancellor. Extraordinary as such a choice would be, they did not venture to refuse, and Thomas thus (in 1162) reached the highest position in the kingdom.

Henry's reason was his intention of bringing the churchmen once more within the scope of the national system of law and law-courts. Reform was necessary for clerks as well as for laymen, and the man who had already helped to carry out the royal plans so vigorously would, Henry supposed, continue the work. Only with a friendly archbishop could the task be accomplished, for both the English clergy and the pope would have to be persuaded. The penalties inflicted on churchmen in their own courts were very much lighter than those suffered by laymen for the same offences, such as a fine and a penance for what would cost a layman his whole property or his life. And the clerical privilege sheltered a great host of men in minor orders below the grade of deacons, such as sacristans, sextons, choir-boys, bell-ringers and all the servants of churches, chapters and monasteries. The Church was in the scandalous position of being a refuge for criminals.

Nor was this all: the supreme authority of the Church was the pope, and suitors in ecclesiastical courts could appeal to him for further hearing. He also (by his legates or other messengers) could call any case away from the bishop's court to judge it in Rome, while the church lawyers claimed to judge every case among laymen which involved evidence of a marriage or a will, or

even of a broken promise (perjury); in other words, nearly every case of inheritance, and many of debts, would go to the church courts, and many were taken to Rome, whither the unlucky suitors had to go or to send their proctors, at vast expense and the waste of, probably, several years. If they could not afford the cost, they lost their suits.

The continuance of this new papal system—first developed in the eleventh century—would evidently make justice and government at home impossible, and Henry maintained that all he wished was to restore the conditions of "the days of my grandfather." Would not the clergy agree to observe "the ancient customs of the realm," as known to the Conqueror and to the Anglo-Saxons?

Henry had hitherto had Becket's help in naming from among the royal chaplains bishops more interested in English independence than in papal autocracy, afraid, indeed, that the new papal policy aimed at giving most church property to the monks, and at governing the national Church by Roman legates. If the new archbishop would lead them as the king expected, there would be little difficulty with the English bishops.

But his elevation to the archbishopric compelled Becket to choose between directing the State or the Church. Hitherto he had been the greatest of royal ministers, but the sphere of the Church was independent and world-wide, and to remain, as primate, a mere royal agent could satisfy neither ambition nor conscience. He had told Henry that henceforth he must seek only the good of the Church, but such phrases were part of the usual conventions of the day, when it was proper for a new bishop to profess himself to be unworthy and unwilling to accept the office. To Becket, however, the good of the Church meant her power and glory. The first indignant outcries of the clergy on the news of the shocking appointment were silenced by the surprising change in the conduct of the new archbishop, who showed himself devout, ascetic and profusely charitable. Crowds of poor folk were daily fed at his gate; monks and priests and church lawyers were his companions. Moreover he set his lawyers to hunt out every scrap of ecclesiastical claim to lands or privileges which could be unearthed from ancient times, and in demanding them from the barons or officials concerned he threatened excommunication, declaring that he should not ask the king's permission to excommunicate his servants; the precedents set by Lanfranc and Theobald in this respect counted as nothing. Ignoring his own conduct while chancellor, Becket now refused to allow the king's judges to deal with clerical criminals, and himself let them off very lightly. He made himself the leader of the first successful opposition to the king's authority by forbidding the levy of a tax on a new method to be made on the Canterbury land. Such an entire opposition of the Church to the State, though from the time of Gregory VII frequent enough on the continent, was a new

thing in England, and Henry II was hardly the king to submit to it.

Henry and Becket now strove to put each other in the wrong. The king required the prelates to admit that they recognised the Ancient Customs of the kingdom; and on getting from Becket a kind of general assent, he proceeded to have what he called the old customs drawn up as a series of rules, the famous Constitutions of Clarendon (1164). Put into plain terms these rules proved strangely sweeping and precise. Clerks accused of crimes should be tried by the bishop in the presence of a royal official, to whom, if guilty, the clerks should be handed over for punishment. Royal permission was necessary (*a*) before tenants-in-chief or the king's servants might be excommunicated; (*b*) if bishops or parsons wished to go out of the kingdom; (*c*) before an appeal at law might "go further" than the archbishop's court (*i. e.* to Rome). There were other rules securing the authority of the king's courts in many other points, but the three given above cut at the root of the novel papal theory of the separation of the Church from the State or nation.

The bishops would have roundly rejected the whole of the Constitutions, but the lay barons, wholly with the king, used plain threats, and the archbishop gave in; then the others had to follow suit. As soon, however, as the council broke up Becket declared he had "sinned" and repented ostentatiously, very much offending the other bishops, whom he had led to accept the Constitutions and who now felt it better to keep their promise. Next, Becket endeavoured to fly to France, where the pope, Alexander III, was at the time, as if he expected to be ill-treated at home, which offended the king. The sailors of his ship, however, aware of the position, refused to take him without the royal order, and he had to go back and to be satisfied with a papal "dispensation," authorising him to break any promises he had made which would be "contrary to the freedom of the Church or the rights of Rome." This system of "dispensing with" vows and promises had become a weapon of church politics ever since Gregory VII.

The quarrel between king and archbishop became more and more bitter, and Becket, having provoked the rage of the barons at the Council of Northampton by defying the justiciar and the council, at last succeeded in flying to France in disguise (1164). For six years he remained abroad, a useful tool for Louis VII, an embarrassment to the pope, who was himself exiled from Rome by the emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, and feared to see England join with those who acknowledged the emperor's anti-pope. However, he felt obliged to support an archbishop who fought so hotly for the privileges of the Church, so he condemned the Constitutions of Clarendon and made Becket papal legate to England (1166). The archbishop thereupon, without returning home, proceeded to excommunicate his enemies and threatened that

the king himself should be sentenced. The pope's anxiety to make peace between them spun matters out till in 1170 Henry II, who had long been anxious to see his heir, Prince Henry, crowned in his own lifetime and acknowledged as future king, determined to act without the archbishop, who by right and custom should have performed that ceremony, and he caused the archbishop of York, with other bishops, to crown " the young king."

The pope then prepared to suspend the bishops who had acted, and Henry, afraid that his son's coronation would be held void, gave in so far as to celebrate a reconciliation with his archbishop and invite him back to England. Whereupon Becket suspended the bishops himself, and as soon as he reached England excommunicated them all.

Henry, in Normandy, received the news with a burst of fury, and raged at his faithless subjects, who let him become " the laughing-stock of a low-born clerk."

Four of Becket's personal enemies caught at the words; they rushed to England, went straight to Canterbury before the king's messengers could catch them up, and slaughtered the archbishop in his own cathedral.

This murder was utterly contrary to Henry's wishes and interests, but he was instantly treated by the pope and the king of France as the cause of it, and the catastrophe flung all England into a passion of sympathy for the murdered archbishop. Devotion to his memory almost took the place of religion. The polluted cathedral was hung with black and closed for a whole year. Pilgrims began to pray by the archbishop's grave, and it was rumoured that miracles were wrought. All the clergy, whatever their views had previously been, felt bound to declare Becket a martyr and condemn the king. Henry's political enemies seized the opportunity to unite against a king who, as the enemy of the Faith, might be openly attacked; the king of France sent post haste to Rome to hasten the inevitable sentence of excommunication; the feudal barons, in all Henry's dominions, prepared to declare young Henry their king and depose his father, so as to recover their freedom for perpetual war and licence.

It was clear that as soon as the excommunication was published all would fall upon the condemned monarch, whose own servants would probably be afraid to obey him. For three days Henry was paralysed by despair; then he sprang into fierce energy to defend himself and his plans for England from the flood of destruction. An excommunication had to be published in the country where the condemned man was: Henry sent messengers to Rome to protest his own innocence and to offer entire satisfaction to the pope, while at the same time he hurried to put as much sea-space as possible between the papal messengers and himself. He turned his sudden necessity into an opportunity for asserting his royal supremacy over Ireland (*see* Chapter XXXVIII),

and there for six months (October 1171 to April 1172) he was energetically laying foundations for an organised kingdom, while every kind of hindrance delayed the journey of the papal messengers. Then came word that a second set of messengers with the pope's absolution awaited him in Normandy. Back flew the king, carrying his son Henry with him, to keep him from the rebellious barons, and was in Normandy in May, before the king of France had news of his removal from Ireland.

He had prevented the publication of the excommunication and foiled the plans of Louis VII and of the rebels, but with regard to the great church question at issue he was utterly beaten, for to purchase the papal forgiveness he was compelled to give up every point of the Constitutions of Clarendon.

The rebellion already prepared was only put off for a year by Henry's prompt action, but by the time the Young king and his supporters had made up their minds in 1173, Henry II was ready. He himself defeated the French effort in Normandy; his justiciars defeated the English barons. When the king of Scots, William the Lion, invaded the north (1174), Henry was able to return to England and to conciliate public opinion by undergoing a thorough public penance at Becket's tomb. The Scottish king was defeated at Alnwick and taken captive on that very day, and all England believed that the king's repentance had won the forgiveness of Heaven.

XVIII

CHIVALRY AND THE CRUSADES—THE SONS OF HENRY II

Wise as Henry II was, he failed altogether in his management of his own family. He had magnificent plans for the greatness of his sons, yet he would never allow them the least independence during his own lifetime. He intended his eldest son, Henry, to inherit England and Normandy; Richard, the second son, was to have his mother Eleanor's duchy of Aquitaine; Geoffrey was wedded while still a boy to the young heiress of Brittany, and so became its duke; John was to be lord of Ireland, and count of Savoy if he married the heiress of that county. Their three sisters were married respectively to the king of Castile, the king of Sicily, and Henry the Lion, the greatest prince of Germany. But the sons wanted to enjoy power at once, and when Henry and Eleanor at last quarrelled bitterly with each other, it was easy for the mother to set her sons against their father.

The certainty that the princes would command them encouraged Henry's discontented barons, and though the rebellion of 1173–4 was quickly put down a worse rising broke out ten years later. The three elder brothers were fighting each other in France when Henry II interfered. At once they sank their quarrels to turn together against their father, and with the zealous help of the king of France, Philip Augustus, they raised war in all the king's French dominions. Young Henry soon died (1183), and then Geoffrey, but Richard refused to be reconciled and, joined by John, personally attacked his father in 1189. Henry was at the moment too ill to command his forces effectively, and fled. Richard and Philip hunted him from place to place till he died, muttering—"Shame, shame on a conquered king," his last spark of life quenched by the discovery that his favourite child, John, had conspired against him.

Yet these same princes, Henry, Geoffrey and Richard—unnatural, selfish and faithless—were regarded by their contemporaries as splendid examples of chivalry. Knights and poets wept over the untimely death of "the Young king;" Geoffrey was praised as an accomplished knight; Richard's splendid name, Cœur de Lion, was the tribute of a general admiration, which was in no wise concerned with wisdom or morals. The Age of Chivalry had begun.

Chivalry, as the word suggests, was the standard of conduct befitting a *chevalier*, or knight. Originally French, this idea of

knighthood as a rank, which imposed certain obligations upon the holders, spread rapidly among the western peoples who, in the eleventh century, were beginning to emerge from " the gloom and iron and lead " of the Dark Ages, and it became a valuable force in the development of better modes of life.

At first the purely soldierly virtues were aimed at: courage, generosity, faithfulness to the pledged word, abstinence from revolting cruelties to equals. Pride of birth, which helped these virtues, was a merit. But chivalrous generosity was for a long while exercised only to the knight's social equals; the crowd outside the pale of noble birth did not count. William Rufus was in his own time considered a pattern of knighthood.

But from several directions influence was at work which raised the standard. First, the Church taught the knight to respect the houses of God, and men and women of religion, then, to be himself devout and charitable, and even to use his power to protect the weak and innocent. Mercy became recognised as a virtue, and the increasing veneration felt for the Blessed Virgin Mary led to greater respect for all womanhood. Finally, a religious sanction was given to knighthood itself, when, at least sometimes, the young noble, keeping a vigil in the church beside his weapons, and assuming them with the priest's blessing, learned that he was especially bounden to practise the Christian virtues and was himself responsible for doing right in God's sight, instead of contentedly accepting the gross theory of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that secular life unavoidably plunged men into sin and that all they could or need do was to purchase the prayers of holy men for their souls.

A second influence which softened military life was intellectual; poetry and song and learning in general began to be thought very fitting for the knight, especially in Provence, which had never quite lost the traditions of Latin culture, and where poetry and gentle manners flourished like a growth of nature. The young Henry's chief friend was a famous poet, Bertrand de Born, and Richard I, who had been brought up in Aquitaine, was himself a composer of verse.

Thirdly, the world of chivalry, like many other departments of medieval life, was profoundly affected by the Crusades, both in its actual practice of warfare and in its code of manners.

(*a*) In warfare, knights learned the effectiveness of fortifications and saw that they should be planned scientifically. They made better weapons and armour and machines for hurling missiles; the need of protecting themselves in their metal sheaths from the burning sun produced the linen *surcoat*, and since in closed helmets and surcoats men looked alike, the need for distinctive marks produced crests and coats of arms. Then a complete system was devised of arranging these tokens of family and rank which after the Third Crusade developed into the artificial science of *heraldry*. Its rules became so exact that great men retained among their followers

trained heralds, able to read the arms on a coat like a book and to tell from them the name, rank and relationship of the wearer. When the rules of knightly manners grew complicated (in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) these heralds became experts on courtly behaviour, and were very useful as ambassadors and messengers, always being unarmed, and almost as much respected as if they were clergy.

(*b*) Contact with foreign soldiers as brave as themselves and often more skilful gave the knight a wider outlook; he found other qualities of value besides courage, and if discipline and organisation came but with extreme slowness, still the foundation of the Order of Knights of the Hospital of St. John, early in the twelfth century, was an early recognition of the need and duty of succouring the wounded. The Hospitallers were founded by some Italian merchants, but the Order rapidly became popular, and its priories soon

rose all over the west of Europe. The other great crusading Order, that of the Knights of the Holy Temple of Zion—or Templars—had been founded a few years earlier, and was an attempt to combine the monastic ideal with the knightly. The Templars were vowed to obedience and chastity, but they were trained to fighting instead of to prayer. Men of noble birth filled their ranks, for the consecration of fighting was an ideal which they could easily accept. The order was rapidly endowed by the nobility with lands, and its wealth and pride became proverbial. The sole reason of its existence was to fight the infidel in Palestine; but its wealth and good organisation gave the members so much power that more of them were to be found in their splendid homes in France, the Empire or England, than in Palestine.

For nearly two centuries after their beginning in 1096, the Crusades were the most remarkable channels through which novelties, whether

in thought or in material things, poured into the west. Though England did not send out very many soldiers to the First Crusade, there must have been a few among the followers of Duke Robert and Edgar Atheling who survived to come home. They brought, among other tales of the marvellous east, the tale of St. George, who had appeared, as they believed, at the terrible siege of Antioch, and turned the tide of battle, and who afterwards was accepted as the patron saint of England. In at least two Norman churches, paintings of this story have quite lately been discovered, beneath later whitewash, on the walls, placed there by the returned Crusader (in Shropshire, and in Norfolk).

Knights Fighting, Thirteenth Century.

In the latter half of the twelfth century England certainly experienced her full share of foreign influence. Not many went from this country to Palestine on the Second Crusade (1147), but English crusaders took a large share in the rescue of Lisbon from the Moslem, and the consequent foundation of the kingdom of Portugal.

The influence of the Crusades, also, reached England through France, her principal gate and road to the rest of the world. The journey to Palestine was full of adventure and experience. Men went either overland by the south German roads to Constantinople and Asia Minor, or else, more wisely, overland to one of the great Italian ports—Genoa, Pisa, Amalfi or Venice, and thence by sea. They were amazed by the vastness and the luxury of the city and court of the Greek Emperor, and, more disastrously, by the deserts and huge mountains of Asia Minor, where most of the warriors of the Second Crusade perished. They admired the activity of the Mediterranean ports, their crowds of galleys and sailing ships such

as no English harbour could have contained; their strong fortifications, beside which English walls seemed mere fences; their stone-built houses and quays, the glorious churches which were already rising in the twelfth century. And they wondered at the wealth of the merchants and at the freedom these Italian cities enjoyed from feudal lords or kings, each by itself a tiny state exercising its own sovereignty.

Crusades turned out to be more complex undertakings than mere hard fights in Palestine against the Turks, though their calamitous results, the introduction of leprosy, rats and plague, were not at first noticeable. The science of the east, whether Christian and Byzantine (Greek), or Mohammedan and Arabic, gave the easterns one great advantage over the west; the climate gave them another. And as the east was infinitely more civilised than the west, the hosts of rough Crusaders were puzzled to find the Greeks unfriendly, and again puzzled to find that not all Moslems were barbarous Turks, but that the cultivated Arabians or Saracens had chivalrous standards perhaps superior to their own, and politer manners, and, moreover, possessed a knowledge of mathematics, medicine, agriculture, and other sciences, which the west would gladly learn from them, and which, in Sicily, was actually being learned. English intercourse with Sicily, under Henry II and Richard I, helped to bring some of this knowledge to England. When Richard I led a division of the Third Crusade (1189–92), many of his feudal vassals of England and Normandy, as well as his ministers, chaplains and clerks made direct acquaintance with Sicily, Cyprus and Palestine. But to the mass of his subjects the principal results of his Crusade seemed to be the extortion of immense sums of money, and two remarkable popular movements, the opportunity for which came from the king's absorption in the crusade. The first was a general attack upon the Jews, the other, the securing by the Londoners of a form of free self-government, called a *Commune*, at the hands of his brother Prince John (*see* Chapter XXV). The Jews, since their admission into England by the Conqueror, had become enormously wealthy as moneylenders and farmers of the taxes and, as they believed that the Crown would always, for its own sake, take their part against their creditors, they behaved with extreme arrogance, even to the point of openly showing contempt for the rites of the Christian Church. They were, therefore, detested by the Church and the people, and especially by those knights, citizens, monks, or clergy who had borrowed money of them, probably in order to satisfy the claims of Crown officers or of papal law-courts, or to fit themselves out for a foreign war or a Crusade, or to build a castle or church, and then found themselves ruined by the exorbitant interest taken.

At Richard's coronation a chance scuffle gave rise to the convenient rumour that the king had ordered an attack upon the Jews, and a ferocious mob burst upon the London Jewry, and with fire and sword

made almost an end of it and its capitalist inhabitants. The king dared not or cared not to punish the whole of London, and the example was promptly followed at Bury St. Edmunds, Norwich Lynn, Lincoln, Stamford, and worst of all at York.

All that the regents whom Richard had left behind him ventured to do by way of punishment was to exact a few fines. The Cistercian Order paid the king 1000 marks to cancel its debts to the Jews of 6500 marks. Thus the massacres succeeded in wiping out a number of debts, though nothing permanent resulted. The churchmen actually rejoiced, as though the massacres were deeds of virtue, for they called the Jews "God's enemies." Out of this John made profit by selling fresh privileges (1201) to the Jews.

The drain of money for the king's foreign undertakings did not cease with his departure for Palestine. The regents had to collect great sums to send after him, and finally, when his dangerous return journey landed him in a German prison, they had almost to strip the country to pay a ransom for him.

During the war in Palestine Richard had made a personal enemy of the duke of Austria. On his way home he was wrecked and tried to get through the duke's dominions (then the frontier state of the empire) in disguise. He was discovered and seized by the duke, who shut him up in prison and then sold him to the more powerful and politic emperor Henry VI.

This emperor looked on Richard as his rival in Sicily (which he himself claimed), and was glad to have him safely shut up. Philip of France saw that there was a brilliant opportunity of breaking up the Plantagenet dominions and abetted the emperor's action. Richard's perfidious brother John embraced Philip's help to secure for himself Richard's fiefs; the pope alone thundered wrath on the perfidy of the Germans in attacking a Crusader. The English and Aquitanian justiciars had to strain every resource to collect the huge sum of 150,000 marks which the emperor demanded. A large part was actually got together and sent to Germany, where the emperor forced Richard to humiliate himself by doing homage, as though England were now to become a fief of the empire.

As the emperor never had the power to enforce his claim no effect was produced in England, but Richard wore his crown with great state when he at last reached his kingdom, as if to wipe out the memory of the disgrace.

One little noticed result of his captivity was the favour he showed to the German merchants of Cologne, who had long had their Gild-house, or Hansa-house, in London and had received a charter from Henry II. They helped Richard while he was a prisoner, and in return he freed their London colony from taxation.

Richard's interests were not in London. He even countenanced a London "democrat," one William Fitzosbern, "Longbeard," who tried to get a share in the government of the city for the poorer

artisans, though he did not dream of interfering to save the overbold agitator from the gallows when the richer citizens overcame him. He was busy in France, erecting a splendid fortress on the Normandy frontier, *Château Gaillard* (Saucy Castle), and building up an alliance against Philip II, when he was killed, during the siege of a castle in Aquitaine, by a bolt from a crossbow.

XIX

THE CROWN AND THE BARONS: (1) JOHN AND HENRY III

The one new class which the conquest had created in England was that of the feudal barons, and from the conquest to the death of Richard I, a party in this class had constantly tried to assert its own idea of liberty against the royal idea of order. Under Stephen the barons had succeeded, but the other kings had been able to keep them in check. A considerable number, especially among the less powerful barons, were always supporters of the king, either from good sense or friendship, or out of self-interest, and some were themselves royal officials. The king could further rely on his own troops, drawn from his great demesnes, and on professional soldiers in his pay, who were to be hired from several parts of the continent; the English usually called them Flemings, or Brabançons. But his final support lay in the nation as a whole. He could order the sheriffs to call out the levy of their shires in confidence that the free farming people would gladly side with the king against the feudal lords, and would not only fight but provide workmen and horses, tools and food for any march or the siege of any castle. Thus every insurrection, from 1074 to 1194, was firmly suppressed.

King John broke up this natural union of king and nation, and drove the English people and the barons into a kind of alliance against the Crown.

John had much ability, like all the sons of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, but he was absolutely selfish, and the sole member of his family who exhibited both cowardice and deliberate cruelty. The war he had to fight with the French king was really lost because of his odious character. That war and its results had a very powerful effect upon England.

Before Richard I died he had announced John as his heir. But according to strict feudal rule Arthur of Brittany, the son of Geoffrey, was the more correct claimant. The nobles, therefore, were uncertain. In Normandy, as in England, they accepted John; Aquitaine, by the wish of Eleanor, adhered to him also; Maine and Anjou preferred Arthur. King Philip, of course, supported Arthur, and having picked a quarrel with John, got ready to conquer Normandy for himself, as the price of his assistance to Arthur, now (1202) a lad of fifteen. The latter, with the principal nobles of his party, went to seize the old Queen-duchess Eleanor in her castle of

Mirabeau, but she stood a siege, and John appeared in time to rescue her and to take Arthur and all his supporters prisoners. His own vassals had stipulated that Arthur should be set at liberty, but John, who never hesitated to promise anything, shut him up in prison at Rouen and shipped the rest of his unhappy captives, loaded with fetters, to England, where, in Corfe Castle, a score of them were starved to death. In a short time it was known that Arthur had been murdered, and as his keeper, Hubert de Burgh, had disobeyed the king's order to blind the young prince, men whispered that John himself was the murderer.

Indignation now turned many of the nobles to the side of Philip, while the mercenary troops, whom John employed in France but did not pay, plundered the countryside, and John himself made no effort to succour the most loyal of the Normandy towns, only saying, "Let be, let be, one day I shall win it all back." But he fled secretly from his duchy to England; Philip took Château Gaillard, and Rouen and the rest of Normandy surrendered in despair. When Queen Eleanor died (1204), Poitou and John's other dominions in the midland of France followed the example of Normandy, and only the south-west, Gascony, refused to acknowledge the king of France but persisted in remaining loyal to the king of England.

This was very natural, for John—and after him, Henry III and Edward I—represented the long line of native dukes of Aquitaine; and under the Plantagenets the Gascon nobles enjoyed the greatest liberty, while the lively wine-trade with England made the fortunes of the cities, especially Bordeaux and Bayonne, and of the country growers, all of whom had much more freedom than the subjects of the king of France. To relinquish England for France would mean ruin, consequently Gascony clung to her Plantagenet sovereigns till the fifteenth century, and thus the English kings still found themselves feudal vassals of the Crown of France.

The arrival of John in England, defeated and discredited, began a new phase in our political history. The constant presence of a rapacious and tyrannical monarch was an unwelcome novelty, and for the next half-century the Crown was to be incessantly struggling with a resentful baronage. Though they still spoke French, the feudal lords had by this time come to identify themselves with England. They no longer had any estates in Normandy and it was to their honour and interest to develop the prosperity and greatness of their island home. From this time, therefore, the rapidity with which the different classes, noble and non-noble, mixed with each other becomes remarkable. In continental countries about this time the nobility were beginning to close their ranks, to set up social and legal barriers between themselves and "the common people." In England no such new idea of the nobility of blood crept in. Normans had married Saxons, freemen could become knights or nobles, the younger sons of nobles were merely freemen, unless they acquired estates for themselves (by marriage, gift or purchase)

which might induce the king to place them in the rank of barons: even villeins could become freemen by purchase or grant from their lords and were allowed to plead in law courts. The result was the growth of a *Middle Class*, larger and stronger than in any other country—the Free Commons of the realm.

The policy of two great justiciars under Richard and John, Archbishop Hubert Walter and Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, had confided some of the powers and responsibilities of government to the hands of these free and often well-to-do men, who formed the lesser landholders in each county. They ranked as knights, and those empowered to represent them were termed, then and for long ages afterwards, the *Knights of the shire*.

It was one of the theories of chivalry that a knight was the social equal of the noblest, even of the emperor, a theory usually interpreted on the continent as a right to equal lawlessness; here, this act of the statesmanlike archbishop created out of the knights a power for conducting justice. Four of them were to be chosen in each shire-court to attend to the criminal cases (called the *Pleas of the Crown*, when the judges were named coroners, or crowners); that is, they supervised the justice which kept the land in order. Fitz-Peter extended the liberty of self-government already won by London to other important towns by granting charters.

In other words, the Crown and its ministers had recognised the right and the duty of a great and growing middle class in both shires and towns to assist in the task of government, nor could any precise limit be drawn between one class and another. Great nobles, lesser nobles, knights, freeholders, merchants, craftsmen and prosperous peasantry joined hands, as it were, each with the group above and below; they intermarried, and they bought and sold each other's lands and goods.

When, therefore, John's proceedings alienated the nobility, the clergy and the citizens alike, there was no hindrance to their common union against the Crown, as he, and, later, his son discovered to their great discomfiture.

John's object was to collect enough money and men to "get it all back again." But no one believed in his courage or capacity, and all murmured at the heavy taxes and, with some success, shirked paying them. In the midst of the discontent Archbishop Walter died, and John's bad management brought him into conflict with the pope and the clergy. He intended to appoint to the primacy the bishop of Norwich, de Gray, a trusty official of his chancery; but a number of the Canterbury monks, to prevent such an indignity, elected in secret their sub-prior and despatched him to the pope for consecration, hoping that their nominal right to elect the archbishop might now become acknowledged as a real and independent right. Hitherto the kings had generally contrived to get the convent to elect their nominee.

When two candidates appeared at Rome, each with letters calling

him archbishop-elect, Innocent III could but investigate the matter. He decided that the political cleric, de Gray of Norwich, was unfit for the great office, and that the sub-prior had been improperly elected, and he invited the three deputations at Rome, sent from the monks, the English bishops, and the king, to combine in a fresh and public election at Rome. John consented to this proceeding, believing that his intrigues had secured the election of de Gray. But the pope persuaded the electors to act honestly and choose an eminent English theologian and cardinal, Stephen Langton, whom he forthwith consecrated (1206). John now refused to keep his word and sent insulting letters to the pope. Innocent informed him that his consent was not necessary, and when the king still refused to receive Langton, the pope laid England under an Interdict.

This sentence, recently invented by the See of Rome, was a punishment laid on a nation in the expectation that the national misery would move the sovereign, or perhaps produce rebellions which would compel him to submit to the pope. An Interdict laid on France had already brought Philip Augustus to obedience. It meant that most of the religious services ceased, and those still allowed (on Sundays) were held in the churchyards; marriage and baptism might only be celebrated in gloom and semi-privacy; worst of all, to the mind of that day, the dead might not receive full Christian burial. Moreover, as all holy days were holidays and usually included mirth and feasting in the churchyards, if not in the churches themselves, and as processions and music largely depended on the clergy and the singers, bell-ringers, etc., of the churches, an Interdict meant the stoppage of nearly all local pleasure.

The king, who was thus aimed at by the pope, was nevertheless the person who profited. He forbade the clergy to obey the pope, and when they, of course, disobeyed his order, he seized upon the whole wealth of the bishops, the Knights Templars, the monasteries and parish clergy in general; and as the sheriffs and their underlings knew that there was now no protection for the clergy, the unfortunate men were robbed, outraged and even murdered all over the country. The bishops fled abroad, the monks shut themselves up inside their strong walls, but the ordinary clergy were helpless and some gave way to the king, while the rest suffered misery or even death, for the space of five years. The king secured such enormous wealth from the spoils of the Church that he could for a time do without the usual taxes, and this was felt to be at least a set-off to the universal gloom. There was no thought, as yet, of rebellion. Some even went so far as to suggest that the pope was in the wrong.

John was successful, too, in securing the firm alliance of the king of Scots, William the Lion, whose heir, Alexander, married his daughter Joanna, and in obtaining another marriage alliance and due submission from Llewellyn, the powerful prince of North Wales. On the continent his own nephew and ally, the new emperor, Otto IV, was menacing the king of France. Even in Ireland—the last refuge

of rebellious or terrified barons—John was so strong that with one campaign (1210) he brought the chiefs and the English barons there to complete submission. In short, the system of rule built up by Henry II worked with complete success under his unscrupulous son.

It was the perfidy and cruelty of John himself which, in spite of his sweeping successes, at last turned all the leaders of the people against him. There were ever-growing reports of the tortures he used to make the wealthy part with their treasures, of the frauds he commonly used—such as causing people to pay great sums for a legal decision or a personal boon, and then cancelling the decision. Some of the religious houses were so utterly stripped that the monks had to disperse and beg a refuge at a more fortunate place. In the forest districts, under personal royal authority, men lived in constant terror. He kept the nobles submissive by seizing their children as hostages and had no scruple in maltreating the unfortunate prisoners. When Matilda de Braose, whose husband was one of the greatest lords in the Welsh Marches, refused, as she said, to send her children to risk the fate of Arthur of Brittany, John spared no pains till de Braose was a hunted exile and his over-bold wife and her eldest son prisoners in his own hands. He shut them up in Corfe Castle and left them to perish of thirst.

But Innocent III was a pope of unshakable resolution. As the king of England was not moved by the Interdict, he was next excommunicated (1209)—placed outside the fold of all Christians, who were forbidden to serve or to help him. Still no open movement was made against the triumphant king. Finally the pope threatened to depose him, to absolve all his subjects from their allegiance, and to give the king of France divine authority to carry out the sentence, and thus to take the kingdom for himself.

As John was all this time still at war with Philip Augustus, the latter welcomed the offer; many of the barons began at once to arrange their own terms with the French king, and the Welsh got ready for war and attacked the castles on the Marches. John discovered that he might be overwhelmed by this combination and with startling suddenness reversed his policy. He entirely submitted to the pope (1213), accepted Archbishop Langton, promised to pay compensation to the bishops and clergy, and offered to hold his kingdom as a fief from the pope, to whom he would pay a yearly fee of 1000 marks. This complete submission produced an equally quick forgiveness from Innocent III, who despatched a legate to accept the king's homage, ordered the French king to desist from war, since the king of England was now an obedient son of the Church, and directed Archbishop Langton to absolve John and pacify the barons. Two years followed, crowded with events.

The new primate was not only a cardinal and a scholar, but a patriotic Englishman and a wise statesman, and he insisted that before being absolved the king must reform his treatment of his subjects, and held up the charter of Henry I as a model for him. The

king performed his homage to Pandulf, and called a meeting of barons to St. Albans to settle what was to be paid to the bishops. To this meeting he ordered representatives to come from all the royal towns. When, therefore, the barons spoke with the archbishop of justice and Henry I's charter, the townsmen were witnesses and could carry the news home, and clergy and townsfolk were ready to combine with the feudal lords in resisting the tyranny of the king. The archbishop was felt to be their natural leader, and he began to draw up their common demands in a definite form.

John, meantime, had gone to France, where he was trusting to his allies to defeat Philip II. Otto IV led an army into Northern France, whither John sent money and reinforcements, but the battle of Bouvines (1214), fought between Peronne and Tournai, was a brilliant French victory and a decisive day for three countries. Otto IV fled headlong and never again was of any importance. John's troops were slain or taken, and all the waverers in France and Flanders declared for Philip.

John fled to England, but there the news of Bouvines had reached the barons and encouraged them to act. The Interdict had been removed, and the barons of the north—Mowbray, Percy, Bruce, de Lacy, and many another—marched in arms to Bury St. Edmund's, where they were joined by a number of southern barons, such as Beauchamp, Montacute, de Clare, FitzWalter. From the west came young William Marshal, heir of the earl of Pembroke, and there were the heads of the great houses of Bohun, Bigod and de Vere (earls of Hereford, Norfolk, and Oxford), besides many others.

The king was at Oxford, the barons at Brackley, and the archbishop went to and fro trying, with old William Marshal, earl of Pembroke, John's faithful vassal, to bring about a treaty (1215). The barons' demands were made not only for themselves, but in the name of the Church, of London, and of the entire nation, and were drawn up in a great list far more definite than the ancient charter of Henry I which they had at first taken as their model. From this list was compiled the famous Great Charter—*Magna Carta*—of the liberties which the chiefs of the nation and the Church claimed that their king must recognise and respect. John, in a fury, cried that they might as well ask for the kingdom at once, and swore that never would he become his subjects' slave. He marched southwards, but the barons followed, and on the invitation of the Londoners they entered the capital.

This was almost decisive: all over the land the towns declared for the barons, and royal officials found themselves powerless; no taxes could be collected, or law-courts held. John, thinking to gain time by promises he could afterwards break, offered to meet the barons peacefully at Staines, and there, in the meadow of Runnymede, beside the Thames, he found himself compelled to issue the Charter in the form of a grant from himself to the bishops and barons: "Know that I have granted——" There followed a com-

plete summary of all that Englishmen could in those days consider as the fair liberties of clergy, baronage, citizens and free tax-paying landowners, which the king had hitherto been outraging (*see* Chapter XX.).

John intended this grant merely as a trick to gain time, until he could receive the pope's letters and mercenary troops whom he expected from Gascony or Brabant. As Dover was held for him by Hubert de Burgh the barons could not keep them out.

The pope did all John expected. He declared the Charter void, absolved the king from his promises and ordered the barons to submit, since, John being by his own act the pope's vassal, all they had to do was to send their complaints to Rome for the pope to decide upon. Archbishop Langton was blamed, suspended from his office and called to Rome, and special papal legates were sent to excommunicate the rebels.

The barons, without their leader Langton, were at a loss. To the minds of those times a mere defiance of authority was almost unthinkable. All civilised life and thought took for granted the existence of authority, " held " from man to man in a chain which led up to the sovereign and the pope, themselves divinely appointed. But the English barons would never own the pope as their temporal lord, though such a submission had sometimes been seen on the continent. They declared that John had had no right to give the kingdom to the pope without their consent, they, therefore, were not bound to him, and they offered the crown of England to Prince Louis, son of John's overlord, Philip II.

Louis' wife was the courageous and ambitious Blanche of Castile, niece of John and granddaughter of Henry II, who became a very famous queen in French history, and the lords were ready to look on her as English and heiress of the Plantagenet house. Louis accepted the offer, and, while his crafty father negotiated with the pope, to gain time, Louis reached England with French troops and war began in 1216.

John now commanded a large force of mercenaries under a notorious general, Falkes de Bréauté; some of the earls changed sides, preferring their own bad king to an unknown foreigner; and the Cinque Ports, always vigorously anti-French, declared for John and provided him with a fleet. He lost no time, but bestowed the fiefs of the rebellious lords on his mercenary captains, so that many unfortunate villages learned to dread the royal troops. Northampton resisted Falkes de Bréauté and most of the town was burned in revenge. His foreign troops ravaged Hertford and Essex, and John himself led a destructive expedition northward from shire to shire. The new king of Scots, Alexander II, had joined the barons, so John retaliated by burning down Berwick, the principal Scottish port, and sending a ravaging party to the shores of the Forth. He was on his way south again, and laying waste the borders of the Fen country, when the whole situation was altered by his sudden death. Two

months earlier had died Pope Innocent, whose successor, Honorius III, was of a more conciliatory temper, and permitted Langton to resume his post as archbishop (1217).

But John's death did not secure the success of Louis, against whom two influences now fought; first, the pope claimed the practical rights and duties of a feudal suzerain, and had John's elder son Henry, a boy of nine, crowned in Gloucester Cathedral (it is said, with a bracelet), by the papal legate Gualo: secondly, the native dislike of foreigners and doubts of the intentions of Louis began to sway many who had before risked everything to throw off John's tyranny.

Though the crown and the royal treasure which should have paid John's mercenaries had been lost in the tide of the Wash, just before his death, the regent for the child king, the veteran William Marshal, was able to persuade several of the English lords to support the harmless child whose cause might now truly be called national.

Military success followed: Louis was beaten in battle at Lincoln (1217), and the fleet of the Cinque Ports under Hubert de Burgh defeated a French flotilla under the command of a mercenary (once in John's pay) called Eustace the Monk. Louis saw that the tide of fortune was against him, and wisely gave up his adventure (Treaty of Lambeth, 1217).

In the meantime the Earl Marshal and the legate had accepted the Great Charter as the basis of their government. They published it with certain needful alterations—as Henry's grant, and next issued another list of much-needed reforms in the Charter of the Forest (*see* Chapter XX). When the Earl Marshal died (1219) the regency was continued successfully until 1232 by Hubert de Burgh the justiciar, and the foreign bishop of Winchester, Peter des Roches. The charters became the accepted standards of government, and steady administration of justice directed the nation on a path of rapid progress.

But the government of England still depended principally upon the character of her king. Henry and his younger brother Richard were educated by the papal legates and bishops, and grew up to be personally devout and virtuous, with cultivated tastes, especially in art, very good husbands and fathers, affectionate to each other, careful about the externals of religion. Henry was indeed over-generous to monks and priests, but he was without any sense of truth or honour or of duty to his subjects, and ignorant of war. He was extravagant and arbitrary, and he preferred Frenchmen, and especially clerics from Poitou, the home of his tutor Peter des Roches, to Englishmen. Richard had a better sense of public interests and was brave enough, but his affection for his brother led him to support Henry, even when in the wrong.

The man who had most influence with Henry III was Peter des Roches, who had been first a knight, then a clerk, in John's service. His brother and nephew were captains of greedy and cruel mercen-

aries and, by the time Henry began to rule personally (1232), trouble was brewing between Englishmen and foreigners.

Archbishop Langton died in 1228, memorable as a firm patriot and one of the wisest organisers of the Church. He was also a great theologian who especially studied the Bible, which he first arranged into chapters, as we have them now. After his death, Peter des Roches aimed at controlling everything and got rid of Hubert de Burgh, whom he and the young king accused, most absurdly, of treason. One of the charges was that he had stolen out of the royal treasury a magic ring which made the wearer invulnerable, and had given it to the king's enemy, Llewellyn, prince of Wales.

The ungrateful Henry would even have put Hubert to death, but the popular opinion was boldly expressed by a village smith who was called to put fetters on the old justiciar: "I will never lay hands on the man who restored England to the English." Pope Gregory IX was more just than the king and secured the release of de Burgh, who fled to Wales for safety. But des Roches procured the murder, in Ireland, of Richard Marshal, who had endeavoured to get the barons to combine against him.

Even when des Roches was dismissed, owing to the influence of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, the saintly Edmund Rich, the king did no better. He was married (1236) to Eleanor of Provence, daughter of a distinguished count of Provence, who was then in the midst of a disastrous war. In consequence, the new queen brought with her to England a number of her family and attendants, glad to escape to a safer country, and as they were highly cultivated and intelligent, skilled in poetry and art, and expert in the most advanced accomplishments of chivalry, Henry and his brother Richard welcomed them with enthusiasm, and they almost entirely displaced the rougher English nobles at court, thus making themselves and the young queen equally unpopular.

In the course of a few years Prince Richard, earl of Cornwall, married the queen's sister, and the queen's three uncles managed everything: one of them, Boniface of Savoy, was made archbishop of Canterbury, another, Peter of Savoy, was earl of Richmond, and his palace in the Strand was ever after called the Savoy; a third lived at court and settled all business for the king. Soon the king's sister Eleanor married Simon de Montfort, who had come from France to seek a fortune in England and became Henry's next favourite; then the king's foreign half-brothers—for his mother had married a French nobleman—were brought to England to be provided for, where one got the bishopric of Winchester, and another the earldom of Pembroke which had belonged to the patriotic Marshals. Especial resentment was felt at the arrival of a shipful of penniless Provençal ladies whom the king married to the heirs of English barons.

At the same time Henry's extravagance was teaching his nobles to resent his folly and falseness as bitterly as their fathers had the

tyranny of John. Rich as the Crown was in demesne lands, forests and mines, Henry contrived to be continually poor, from his lavishness in giving to favourites what should have remained the permanent resources of the monarchy. He was totally without warlike ability, yet insisted on conducting a futile war (1241–3) against Louis IX at enormous expense. Even the king's religious practices seemed hardly more than reasons for spending vast sums on churchmen. He felt a special devotion for the memory of Edward the Confessor, after whom he named his eldest son, and he began in 1245 to rebuild in his honour the church of the abbey of Westminster. But this, although costly, was a small matter beside the extraordinary payments which he allowed the papacy to draw from England. Legates constantly visited England and taxed the clergy and people in the name of religion and of the papal suzerainty. Henry was abjectly obedient, and, although the bishops and barons alike vainly tried to resist, it was reckoned that 60,000 marks a year went out of the country to the pope and other foreigners. It was the more shameful because these funds were used by the papacy in making war on Henry's own brother-in-law, the Emperor Frederick II.

At last, in 1254, Henry had the amazing folly to accept the pope's offer to sell to him Frederick's kingdom of Sicily for his second son, Edmund, then nine years old. Regardless of the anger of the nobility, the rebukes of Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, and even of his own brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, and Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, the king called together the great Council —which in this reign came to be known by the French name of *Parlement*—in 1237, and simply informed them that he was in debt to the pope for 135,000 marks.

Hitherto the discontent of the barons had been voiced in vain in the Councils (or Parliaments) to which the king had summoned them occasionally. They now resolved to take practical steps and compel Henry to name ministers whom they themselves should control. De Montfort, weary of the royal folly, became their spokesman and leader, and they drew up, in the so-called "Mad" (or frantic) Parliament at Oxford (1258), a scheme of reform called *The Provisions of Oxford*, which was to be carried out in the king's name by a body of nobles. So helpless was Henry in face of the universal opposition that he and Prince Edward, now a youth of nineteen, swore to accept the Provisions, and many of the foreign favourites fled from the country. Richard of Cornwall had already (1257) been elected King of the Romans by some of the German princes.

But the barons found it unexpectedly difficult to make practical reforms, and five years of intrigue followed. The pope absolved the king from his oath to observe the Provisions. The leaders of the barons, de Montfort and the earl of Gloucester, quarrelled. At last both king and barons agreed to lay their quarrel before the saintly king of France, Louis IX, and abide by his judgment. But Louis was himself an autocratic king without any understanding of the

English steps towards self-government, and he declared the Provisions entirely wrong (*Mise of Amiens*, 1264). The barons then refused to accept the ruling, and civil war began. They were supported by London, which furnished troops, provisions and money. They won the battle of Lewes and took the king and Prince Edward prisoners. De Montfort now had his opportunity, and invited a parliament to meet, to which not only barons and earls were to come, but two knights, chosen in the shire-court of each county, and two citizens for every city and borough which had given support to the barons. "Montfort's Parliament," however, settled nothing, and he and Gloucester quarrelled again fiercely. At this point Prince Edward escaped from his gaolers and, placing himself at the head of a number of those who disliked Earl Simon, turned the tables at the battle of Evesham, where the earl was defeated and slain (1265).

The king was now restored as the head of the government, but by Prince Edward's persuasion he allowed the principal articles of the barons to be drawn up as a royal statute.

The struggle of the baronage with Henry III had been indecisive and prolonged, chiefly because (1) they had no wise leader, and (2) the pope had always been allied with the king.

(1) After Langton's death Archbishop Edmund was less well fitted to lead in political strife, and Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, had his hands too full with religious and ecclesiastical reform to wish to interfere in political matters if he could avoid doing so. Simon de Montfort was himself a foreigner, and as such not wholly trusted, nor did he show much capacity in using the authority which in 1264 he held. He gave power and wealth to his own violent and selfish sons, and fiercely resented the remonstrances of the earl of Gloucester. Not till Henry's son Edward became wise enough to grapple with the problem of securing a good government did things at all improve.

(2) The pope's position as overlord of the king, though this claim was tacitly dropped in the course of the century, had enabled Rome to take a hold upon the English nation unknown before. Practically it meant that the king and his servants need keep no promises nor fear any spiritual restraint, while their opponents were harassed in every undertaking by threats or difficulties got up in the church courts. Only Grosseteste was sufficiently firm and clear-sighted to distinguish between the authority of the popes in the Church—which he recognised as fully as any one—and the abuse of that authority in detailed acts of tyranny, which he always resisted. But he had no connected support at home.

For resistance to papal oppression the English had to wait till Prince Edward became king: and it must be remembered that it was only the more educated and thoughtful classes who perceived those abuses; the masses were apt to be a prey to superstition, and it was mainly from their offerings and fees that the papal tax-collectors amassed the great sums which supported the wars and the magnificence of the papal court.

It was otherwise with resistance to royal oppression. This was more easily comprehended, and whatever the suspicions of the barons might be, the townsmen and the intelligent country folk considered Simon de Montfort their own champion. Their knowledge and understanding of current events is proved by the existence of popular songs, perhaps chanted in popular gatherings at market or in the village alehouse. Such songs, in French or Latin, had been sung of Henry II and John, but about de Montfort first, it seems, was a native English ballad composed. From this time such ballads became the regular means of spreading news and opinions, up to the close of the eighteenth century, and hundreds must have been lost for a few that have survived. The "Song of Lewes" is principally a mock at Earl Richard: it begins—

Sitteth all still and hearkeneth to me:
The King of Almain, by my loyalty,
Thirty thousand pound asked he
For to make the peace in the country.
Richard, though thou be ever trick-ard, tricken shalt thou never more:—
The King of Almain weened do ful wel,
He seized the mill for a castel,
With hair-sharp swords he ground the steel
He weened that the sails were (a)mangonel
To help Windsor.

Norman Archer.

Archer, c. 1255, from a tile in Westminster Abbey.[1]

[1] From Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey*, by permission of Messrs. Duckworth & Co. (*Shows the characteristic action of drawing to the ear.*)

XX

MAGNA CARTA AND ITS SEQUEL

In no country but England could a feudal baronage point to so noble a justification of armed resistance to the Crown as Magna Carta. The first and worst period of feudalism was closed after the reign of Stephen, by Henry II, with the support not only of the clergy and the people but of the best of the barons themselves, and the administrative checks imposed by him upon feudalism seemed likely to make the Crown absolute. The real grievance of the barons under the rule of Henry II and Richard was their impoverishment, caused by the heavy sums exacted by the king for reliefs, or as fines or scutages, or by their estates being exhausted during wardships. To this, John had added all kinds of personal wrongs. Yet when the barons of England had him at their mercy they did not seek to abolish the system of government, but to reform it in the particulars which had injured them.

The general rights and duties of feudal lords were as well recognised, but as impossible to define in set terms, as the sanctity of the Church or the principles of farming, so that no explanations of them were drawn up but the king was made to promise redress on each point. Nor did the barons protect themselves alone; the Church, the towns, the merchants, and the free people of the realm are all named, while many of the rules and reforms laid down would affect all classes, excepting the villeins, who, not being freemen, did not as yet come in contact with royal courts and officers at all.

To give a very brief summary of the Charter:—

John is made to promise "for us and for our heirs for ever," first, that "the English Church shall be free, and shall have its rights intact and its liberties uninfringed:" which meant that elections should not be overborne by royal orders and, generally speaking, that rights of freedom from taxation, of sanctuary and so forth, which all men recognised, should not be disregarded by the king or his officers.

Next, the king declares: "We have also granted to all free men of our realm, on the part of ourself and our heirs for ever, all the subjoined liberties, to have and to hold, to them and to their heirs, from us and from our heirs."

Then follows a long series of pledges, of which the chief are—

(*Feudal.*) Reliefs are fixed, £100 for an earl or baron, 100 shillings

for a knight's fee at most, "and he who shall owe less shall give less;" royal custodians are to keep the estates of minors in good condition; wards are to be fairly married and not secretly; widows should not be turned out of their dead husbands' homes for forty days, and should receive their dower money first, nor should they be compelled to marry again. New services should not be imposed on knights or freeholders.

(*Legal.*) The Court of Common Pleas should no longer journey about with the king but should remain in London. Judges of Assize should hear lawsuits about land for each county in the county court, two judges should hold assize four times a year, helped by two knights chosen by the county. Fines were to be in proportion to the offence, nor must the means by which a man earned his living ever be confiscated (the freeman's farmland, the merchant's stock-in-trade, the villein's plough-team). Earls and barons should be fined by the judgment of their peers, and others only upon oath of "upright men from the neighbourhood" (the jury of inquiry in the shire-court). Royal sheriffs and bailiffs were not to be made justices. A woman might not bring an accusation of murder unless on account of her husband. No freeman should be imprisoned or attacked save by the lawful judgment of his equals (the shire-court procedure) or by the law of the land (royal statutes): "To none will we sell, to none will we deny or delay right or justice."

(*Commercial.*) Merchants may come to England and travel or depart freely, except in time of war, only subject to the ancient customs. In war, they should be held as hostages for the good treatment of English merchants abroad.

Royal Constables must not take (as purveyance) the corn, goods or carts of any one without payment (10*d.* a day for a cart with two horses). Weirs must be removed from the Thames and all other rivers (certainly not carried out). The same measure of wine, ale and corn must be used throughout the country, the London quart, and the same width for cloth, two ells (not carried out yet). Neither individuals nor towns should be compelled to make bridges.

(*Constitutional.*) No scutage or aid should be taken, or London be taxed, by the king without the common counsel of the realm, except for the ransom of the king, or the knighting of his eldest son or the marriage of his eldest daughter. The same rule to apply between the lords and their free tenants. The counsel of the realm should be taken by calling together (*a*) by royal letters, the bishops and abbots, the earls and greater barons, (*b*) by summoning through the sheriffs all the other tenants-in-chief, at forty days' notice, to a meeting, and the business must be settled by those who came.

The City of London should enjoy all its ancient free customs, and so should all other cities and boroughs, towns and ports.

This regulation as to the composition of the Great Council, which the king must consult before taking a tax, is the foundation of

ROYAL FORESTS, 1215.
Districts subject to Forest Law
Actual Royal Woods
(Woods and Chases of the Feudal Nobles not included)
Based on map in Inderwick's "The King's Peace."

parliament. Henry III summoned many such councils; Edward I used the clause about the smaller tenants-in-chief to procure a number of elected persons, chosen in the shire-courts or in the towns. And as it rested with the king to send the summons, it came to be understood that lords who did not receive such a summons were not great barons (peers).

The brief clauses in Magna Carta about the *forests* proved insufficient, so in 1217 the regents for Henry III issued a complete *Charter of the Forests* which secured the disforesting of large districts which the first three Plantagenets had annexed to the royal hunting districts, bringing them under the special forest law instead of under the Common law. The reason for this was the royal desire to get revenue by the fines and forfeitures which forest judges imposed very severely. Forest law, in fact, was royal decree. For instance, courts would be announced very frequently, perhaps in harvest time, and the free men of the district who did not attend would be heavily fined for neglect: yet, if they attended, they lost many days' work on their lands. The punishments for letting animals or dogs stray, for being suspected of poaching a hare, or, still worse, a buck, for using force to drive the king's beasts away from crops or gardens, for building so much as a shed in the forest district, and the like, were exceedingly heavy.

Properly speaking, *forests* were unenclosed wild districts, not by any means all covered with trees, and certainly not uninhabited. Sometimes the Crown would give the rights over a piece of forest to a subject, when it was termed a *chase*. A *park* was enclosed with some kind of fence, and the Crown often gave leave to subjects to have parks of their own. A *warren* was a smaller piece of unenclosed land, where small wild beasts might be hunted, such as hares, rabbits, foxes, wild cats, martens, otters, badgers, all but the first being killed off as vermin; or the wild fowl, such as partridges, woodcock, plover and larks. But the kings began very early to restrict the rights of hunting in warrens to individuals, an abbot or prior, or some baron or knight who doubtless paid a good fee. Such restrictions were called grants of *Free-warren*, but like most grants of privileges, they were really embargoes on every one else. Probably all small game would have been killed off if it had not been for such grants, which made it worth while to preserve the game by only killing at proper seasons, for where public rights of chase were left, game seems to have become extremely scarce. At the close of the thirteenth century, in a manor in South Lancashire it is recorded that there were no longer any such profits, even the turf having been used up, and that the fish in the Mersey were almost exterminated. The royal forests gave the king much more than the pleasure of hunting wild boars and deer (red deer, fallow deer, or roe deer). The timber supplied building material, charcoal and fuel, and in many forests there were quarries and mines, iron in Dean, Kent, Sussex and Yorkshire; in Derby-

shire, lead mines; in Westmorland, silver and lead mines, the forests providing the fuel for smelting, or, in the salt districts of Worcestershire and Salop, for evaporating brine. All these brought profit to the Crown, besides the revenue derived from fines and punishments in the forest courts and fees for swine-feed.

The Charter of the Forest (1217) annulled all the afforestments made by Henry II, Richard and John, who had practically made most of the kingdom "forest." Disforesting meant that tolls, fines for dogs and for other minor offences were now abolished or cut down to reasonable sums, and that ordinary cases of crime would be judged according to the common law of the kingdom. Foresters and bailiffs might no longer exact gifts and fines by their sole order. The courts of *swain-moot* which they held to judge offences towards deer must only be held thrice a year—at Midsummer, Michaelmas and Martinmas. The free inhabitants might feed their pigs in the woods for a fair fee, and have honey, fuel, etc., their oxen were not to be seized for purveyance, and outlawed men were to come to get their pardon, giving pledges that they would not offend again.

Every king thenceforward swore to observe these two charters, and from Henry III to Henry IV each sovereign swore to them more than once. They stood for something more than the actual liberties guaranteed, though these were indeed ample; they stood for a full recognition that the nation had rights which no king could diminish. The vow to keep the charters was a part of the coronation rite which made the royal heir the king.

In future ages much was to be read into the Charters which had never been in the minds of the barons of 1215. Edward I was compelled to allow the words "scutage or aid" to cover all taxation, Charles I, to allow them to cover customs duties, loans and gifts. Similarly, the general statement about the trial of all free men "by their equals, or the law of the land," has been appealed to ever since, whether against tyranny or police safeguards. The belief which men had, from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth, in the universal scope of Magna Carta caused nearly all political reformers to suppose that whatever evil they sought to remedy must be a new invention, and that they were themselves simply restoring liberties which had previously existed, so that the most energetic innovators have claimed ancient sanction. Thus the very misunderstanding of the Charter has been of no slight force in the continuous development of our constitution.

XXI

ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND, 1066–1286

KINGS OF SCOTS

Malcolm III, 1057–1093.	David I, 1124.
Duncan II.	Malcolm IV, 1153.
Donald Bane.	William the Lion, 1165.
Edgar, 1097.	Alexander II, 1214.
Alexander I, 1107.	Alexander III, 1249–1286.

THE conquest of England by William I had a powerful effect on the Scottish kingdom; first, it forced the Scottish kings into definite antagonism with the English sovereign; next, it enabled them deliberately to introduce feudalism into the realm, and by means of this new system to become powerful monarchs and to set the Scots on a path of civilised progress. Few lands have owed so much to feudalism, directed by a royal family of great ability. At the time of the battle of Hastings, Malcolm Canmore (Bighead) had worn for nearly ten years the crown he had snatched from Macbeth, ruling over populations sharply divided in race and interests. These were—

(1) North of the Forth, the Celtic clans, under their independent chiefs, half savage and Christian only in name, but to whom was due his title of "King of Scots."

(2) In the south-west—Galloway and the mountainous parts of the old Celtic kingdom of Strathclyde, inhabited by an equally fierce and uncivilised people, in origin partly Pictish, partly Irish, partly Scandinavian or British, of the same type as peopled the hill and lake district of England southwards to the Lune. By the middle of the thirteenth century most of this district formed the earldom of Carrick; the Norman Baron de Brus, or Bruce, having married the heiress, became its earl.

(3) South of the Forth, Lothian—the most important portion of the kingdom, which had been from the sixth century inhabited by an English population more numerous and purer in race than their kinsmen to the south of the Tyne, who were partly Danish by descent. The western islands were principally Scandinavian and as yet did not own the Scottish king save occasionally and nominally.

There was, therefore, little racial distinction between southern Scotland and England, nor was there any distinct frontier. The great block of moor and mountain called the Cheviots, stretching far

into the southern kingdom, is broken by sundry gaps and dales. On our east coast the narrow level plain along which ran the great Roman road might be artificially barred by fortresses, though fortresses were difficult to provision and to hold. On the west, Liddesdale and Eskdale formed natural roads from Scotland to the plain of Carlisle, whence it was easy to ride along Tynedale eastwards, or, making southwards up the valley of the Eden, to break through Weardale or Teesdale into the Bishopric and Yorkshire.

Where exactly the division between the two kingdoms should run was as yet doubtful, but it was certain that William of Normandy would place it as far to the north as he could, and quite likely that he might even attempt to annex Scotland.

When, therefore, Edgar Etheling fled to Malcolm's court, the king of Scots welcomed him and seized the opportunity to strengthen his own position. Already a widower, he married the Etheling's sister, the gifted, ambitious Margaret, and prepared to be beforehand with William by himself annexing the debatable region north of the Tyne.

William's harrying of the north brought him to the Scottish borders sooner probably than Malcolm had expected, but the struggle went on at intervals, neither obtaining a definite settlement. William marched to the Forth and perhaps even to Abernethy, and Malcolm made some kind of submission—" became his man "—which William perhaps requited with promises of English fiefs. More practical was the English king's erection of the strong new castle on the Tyne, though this seemed to recognise the impossibility of including Northumberland in England.

Malcolm, on the other hand, made terrible ravaging expeditions into English territory, carrying off, not only whatever poor booty the Norman army had left ungathered in the uplands of Durham and Yorkshire, but such numbers of captives that a chronicler boasted that scarcely a cottage in Scotland was without an English slave.

William II was able to take strong measures. He built at Carlisle a sister fortress to Newcastle, hoping to bar the Scottish road southwards, and then contrived to inflict on Malcolm such a deliberate insult as must goad him to a fight, for which the Norman king had made stealthy preparation. Furious with resentment, Malcolm burst into Northumberland as usual, only to fall into an ambush, arranged by a treacherous intimate of his own. The king and his eldest son were set upon suddenly and slain, and the broken Scottish host dispersed.

Margaret, already ill, died on learning the news. A rising of the Celtic lords gave the crown to two princes of their party in turn, and Margaret's sons fled abroad.

William Rufus next intervened with an adroit scheme for insuring his own supremacy in Scotland. After four years of anarchy had weakened the country he sent Edgar Etheling, whose sole success

this was, to lead an Anglo-Norman army across the Tweed and place Edgar, the next surviving son of Malcolm and Margaret, upon the throne, practically as his nominee. Under the wing, first of Rufus, then of Henry I, Edgar ruled, for ten years, a diminished kingdom stripped of both Cumberland and Northumberland. He sensibly recognised the king of Norway's supremacy over the Hebrides, and the practical independence of the king of Argyll, and placed his hopes on the future which the marriage of his sister Edith (Maude) to Henry I might ensure. The agreement which he made with his heirs—his two brothers—to divide the realm for a time was a brilliant solution of the difficulty between the two rival races of his subjects, Celtic and English. Alexander was to be king of Scots, David to be earl, under his brother, of the southern portion (Strathclyde and Lothian) and to discharge all feudal obligations to the English king. The two brothers loyally carried out the design (1107–1124), and Alexander did his best to introduce civilising, that is, English influence in the wild north in the only manner possible for it to accept, by founding bishoprics and religious houses. But he refused to allow his new bishops to recognise the primacy of either York or Canterbury, and St. Andrew's was made the Scottish ecclesiastical centre. He himself dwelt near Dundee; Edinburgh was his most southerly fortress.

When David I (1124–1153) succeeded his brother he had already acquired a knowledge of England, an experience of rule, and a firm personal position which enabled him to carry out, during his reign of nearly thirty years, the transformation of his country, which his genius discovered how to achieve upon the scanty preparations of his brothers.

He feudalised Scotland south of the Tay, and thereby created for himself a military support so strong as to give him the upper hand with the Celtic chiefs, who were themselves soon obliged to admit royal control by assuming the feudal titles and duties of earls and thegns. David created regular fiefs in the Lowland half of his kingdom, granting feudal rights to Normans and Flemings who came at his invitation from the northern shires of England. In Scotland, the fortified house and firm administration of a Baliol, a Bruce, or a Fitzalan meant an increase of safety and order which gave a chance of civilised development. As usual the Norman barons laid the foundations of many a small but prosperous town, and the privileges at once bestowed on these by the Crown stimulated their growth. "The four Burghs" of Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh and Stirling set the standard, and others were added to their company. Each enjoyed the election of its own magistrates and a monopoly of trade in its own district. These Scottish boroughs became self-governing earlier than the English boroughs, and more independent, precisely because their surroundings were so much more violent and backward they could otherwise not have maintained their freedom. To procure a sufficient increase of citizens, it was a rule that a

"thrall" (or serf, a Scandinavian word) who bought a house in a borough and held it undisturbed for a year and a day became a freeman and a burgess (or full citizen).

It was reasonable to suppose that a baronage holding fiefs in both kingdoms, and owing allegiance to both kings, would be an influence for peace between Scotland and England, and during the reign of Henry I in England there was no outbreak of war.

Naturally David had been the foremost to guarantee the succession of his niece, the Empress Matilda, to her father's throne, and when Stephen took possession of that throne the king of Scots promptly made vigorous war, in his niece's name but in his own interests.

Carlisle had been an English fortress under Rufus and Henry, and a string of forts or castles, Wark, Norham, Alnwick, Bamburgh, now stood as defences between it and Newcastle. But Bamburgh was the only one which did not surrender to David, who triumphantly crossed the Tyne to find Stephen waiting at Durham with such lavish offers as, for the time being, bought over Matilda's uncle. Carlisle, with Cumberland, as well as the old Waltheof earldom of Huntingdon, and the fief of Doncaster (the key of the route over the Trent into the Midlands) were all bestowed on David's son and heir, Henry.

But Stephen was lavish in vain. The personal spite of the earl of Chester, who coveted Carlisle himself, was exhibited in gross insults to the young Scottish prince, and the fiery David at once recalled his son, remembered the claims of Matilda, and next year (1138) led three successive raids into the Bishopric of Durham and beyond, ravaging cruelly, though his troops were mostly drawn from the Lowlands.

His defeat at the battle of the Standard, however, inclined David to attend to the efforts of the papal legate to procure a peace. Stephen added Northumberland to Prince Henry's fiefs, except for the two castles of Newcastle and Bamburgh (Treaty of Nottingham, 1139), so that the Lune and the Tees became the Scottish frontier line for the rest of David's reign. And when in 1149 Henry Plantagenet met his great-uncle at Carlisle and secured his support, he promised to cede Northumberland altogether.

When Prince Henry died in 1152, David continued the wise separation of the fief from the kingdom by having Henry's elder son, Malcolm, recognised as the heir to the crown, and making the younger, William, earl of Northumberland. When next year he died he bequeathed to them a firm throne, a tolerably loyal and efficient baronage, an increasing commerce and a system of administration based on sheriffs, set over districts something like the English counties; finally, the most remarkable change of all, a romanised Church with a hierarchy of bishops and abbots richly endowed.

> "He illumined in his days
> His lands with kirks and with abbayes."

David adopted the Roman system of territorial bishoprics and well-disciplined monasteries, and in its favour had practically destroyed the vaguer, but national system of the Culdee church, the legacy of Columba and his followers. He established the Cistercians and other orders in abbeys which soon became famous—Kelso, Dryburgh, Melrose, Holyrood, and others (Scone was older), but he endowed both bishops and monks so over-lavishly that the royal resources were dangerously impoverished, and his distant successor, James VI and I, termed him " a sore saint for the Crown."

The result was to place in the hands of the churchmen a disproportionate share of power which, together with its great wealth, placed it almost permanently in opposition to the nobility and involved it in serious unpopularity with the bulk of the people.

Unfortunately for Scotland, the masterful David I died just before the accession of Henry II in England. The boy Malcolm IV, hard beset by revolts of the discontented Celtic nobles, was at the English king's mercy. Henry II might consider his promise at Carlisle as made only to the powerful David. At all events, he resumed the whole of the northern district (which was soon carved into four counties), generously presenting young William with only the isolated fief of Tyndale, and confirming to Malcolm himself the earldom of Huntingdon.

Both Malcolm IV (1153–1165) and his brother and successor, William the Lion (1165–1214), fulfilled, as earls of Huntingdon, their feudal obligations to the English king, doing homage and coming with troops to fight in his cause in France.

Only in 1174, when the " Young king " Henry rebelled against his father, did William allow himself to be tempted into an effort to recover Northumberland, which he therefore ravaged as of old. But this time the Yorkshire barons were prompt to defend their country. Marching north with speed they caught up with the king of Scots at Alnwick, which he was besieging, while the larger part of his forces were out of reach, plundering the now prosperous country. With a single charge, William lost the gains of a century. He was carried a prisoner first to Northampton, then to safe custody in Normandy. To gain his freedom he was obliged, by the Treaty of Falaise, not only to surrender his English possessions but to become the English king's vassal for the kingdom of Scotland. As a hostage for his good faith, Henry kept William's brother David with several of the principal nobles hostages at his court, and took five of the principal castles into his own hands—Berwick, Roxburgh, Jedburgh, on the border, Edinburgh, the key of the Forth, and Stirling, the gate of the Highlands, while the rest of William's tenants-in-chief had to come to York to do homage. William himself was obliged not only to serve Henry's army, when summoned, as a military vassal, but to obtain his overlord's approval for his government of Scotland.

This lasted till Henry II's death in 1189. Richard I had other

aims and reversed his father's policy. He wished to leave a friendly Scotland behind him when he deserted England for Palestine, and this he secured by allowing William to purchase a full release from his ignominious bonds. Homage was to be done only for the English fief of Huntingdon.

During the thirteenth century peace, as a rule, prevailed between England and Scotland, and William's son and grandson, Alexander II (1214–1249) and Alexander III (1249–1286) devoted themselves chiefly to the affairs of their own kingdom, although during the baronial struggle with John, Alexander II had thrown his powerful influence on the side of the barons, and exhibited his power and independence by marching unhindered through England to do feudal homage to Louis. The peace which ended this threat of war was sealed (1221) by the marriage of the young Scottish king with Henry III's sister Joanna, and of Hubert de Burgh, just then the regent of England, with Alexander's sister Margaret. This at one time seemed likely to bring about another quarrel with the English king, but the English barons, who had much more sympathy with the king of Scots than with Henry III, brought about a renewal of peace. The two kings then agreed never to attack each other, unless in self-defence, and Alexander secured an excellent bargain by giving up Huntingdon in exchange for Tynedale and Penrith (Treaty of York, 1237). Nevertheless, when Alexander III, a boy of ten, ascended the throne, Henry III first tried, though in vain, to persuade him to do homage for his kingdom, and then endeavoured to exercise his personal control in the north by means of an English party at court, in which he was also unsuccessful. No more trouble occurred till, in 1278, Alexander III came to pay homage for his fief to Edward I in the Parliament of Westminster. When the Scottish king had pronounced the usual pledge of his loyalty to Edward as his liegeman, "saving only my kingdom," the bishop of Norwich added: "And saving also the right of my lord King Edward to homage for your kingdom." "To that none has a right save God alone," answered Alexander: and no more was said.

Scotland became a united and prosperous kingdom under the long, firm rule of this king, and the cause of her future calamities was the rapid succession of deaths in the royal family. Within four years' time Alexander's two sons and his daughter, Margaret, married to the king of Norway, all passed away, and the king's only direct heir was Margaret's infant daughter, "The Maid of Norway." Alexander married again, but in 1286 he was cut off by an accident, his horse falling over the cliffs as he was riding homewards on a dark night. The catastrophe plunged Scotland into succession quarrels leading to two centuries of war with England.

XXII

EDWARD I (1272–1307): THE SETTLEMENT OF ENGLAND AND WALES

FORTUNATELY for England, Edward I was ready to take up anew the work of Henry II. He understood that the changed conditions of the age must be recognised and definitely provided for in the plan of government. Throughout his father's long reign all questions had grown more difficult, and there were now many problems to be solved, both at home and abroad, while the latter—especially the relations of England with France, Scotland and the papacy—had often a great deal of influence upon the conduct of the nobles, the Welsh princes, or the clergy towards the king's government, besides affecting the royal finance and the commerce of the realm. Edward had already had much experience in governing, both in his earldom of Chester, with its Welsh appendages, and in Gascony; and the barons' war had taught him some of the needs of England.

Broadly speaking, Edward's aim was to establish royal authority and public prosperity: (1) by stopping the growth of independence among the nobles and the Welsh princes; (2) by bringing old laws up to date and causing a much larger part of the people to take a share in keeping order and in providing troops; and (3) by providing a more regular royal revenue. These objects he nearly reached during the first part of his reign, chiefly by drawing closer the connection between the Crown and the people.

In foreign affairs Edward aimed at (1) establishing a clearer understanding with the French king, in the hope that both sides would then observe their respective duties and rights; (2) obtaining a control over, or union with, the kingdom of Scotland; (3) restraining the pope and his agents from interfering in English affairs.

At home there had been no disorder in 1272–4, though Edward was abroad, on the Crusade, for he had given reappointments beforehand to his father's ministers. The tradition that law died with the king was now discarded, and allegiance was sworn to Edward before his regents. His return was greeted with much rejoicing, the more so that on the way he had settled with the count of Flanders a quarrel which had been disturbing the wool trade.

Edward I was well fitted to become a national leader and hero.

He was very tall and handsome, and dignified of bearing; his great physical strength matched his flawless courage and impetuosity. He was an able general, a brilliant cavalier, an enthusiastic sportsman. Cowardice, meanness or treachery stirred him to fierce wrath, when his eyes shot fire "like a lion's," and men shook with terror before him, but he was ordinarily affable, patient, kindly, a generous donor and ready to forgive the penitent. He was a deeply affectionate son and husband, and a staunch friend to his tried servants, but a downright enemy to those who had earned his bad opinion.

He is the first of our sovereigns since the Conquest who can truly be called English. He spoke the native tongue as well as French. Edward the Confessor, as his own name-saint, was the especial object of his reverence and Westminster his most favoured abbey. Nor had he any of the foreign conviction of a superiority in noble blood; lofty as was his idea of kingship and his ambition, he showed rather the native English sense of a kinship with his people than the feudal arrogance of the first Plantagenets; with him was recovered the English conception of the king as repre sentative and leader, rather than as an antagonist of popular interests. His strongest passion seems to have been an inflexible love of justice in the definite sense of abiding literally by engagements and laws.

From 1275 to 1290 a series of parliaments endorsed, by their acceptance, a series of statutes, many of which were in themselves small codes of law, which have won for Edward the title of "the English Justinian." He had already, before succeeding to the Crown, found and attached to his service the incomparable lawyer and judge, Robert Burnell, who was chancellor as long as he lived. The government was simplified by the appointment of three chief justices, whose courts were known as King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, and there were, besides, the Forest Courts. Financial business was entrusted to a chancellor of the Exchequer, a subordinate official, so that the chancellor himself was left free for the highest duties as not only the supreme head of the law but the chief of all the royal ministers. The business of these courts increased enormously, but the Edwardian system, modified in detail from time to time, served England until the nineteenth century.

In the parliaments, representatives from the counties and towns were collected to take their share of responsibility in accepting the royal statutes and making them known on their return home. Further, Edward consulted these delegates upon taxation and asked them to undertake that definite amounts should be paid by the districts they represented. But they had to agree for the entire community; a single town could not refuse what the majority had voted, any more than a single lord or bishop might refuse to contribute troops, or scutage, or a feudal *aid* which the rest were rendering.

Edward tried several modes of consulting representatives: once (1282) he sent his minister to visit the counties and bargain for a tax on each singly. He called the lords separately to deal with the Welsh war, and bade the clerical, the commercial and the county representatives meet together—for the north at York, for the south at Northampton. Sometimes four knights and sometimes two were called for each county, once, at least (1290), only knights were summoned; but the best plan was found to be for two knights to be elected in each shire (or county) court presided over by the sheriff, and two citizens or burgesses from each city and borough which received the royal command or writ. The prelates were called personally, like the barons, and the cathedral and diocesan clergy sent proctors. Thus were composed "the three estates" of the realm—Barons, Clergy, and Commons—in the "model" parliament of 1295.

The money which the knights and citizens—called the Commons—agreed from time to time to pay for national purposes, was paid in two ways: (1) a *customs* duty on the principal exports; (2) a proportion of the value of private property, a thirtieth, or twentieth, or fifteenth, or tenth. The *customs* were paid by the merchants at the ports, but the effect must have been felt by landowners and farmers. The "great custom" was that of wool, skins and leather; at the end of the century cloth and tin also were important. The property-tax was paid by the inhabitants of each town and county, the very poor being excused. In **foreign affairs** trouble first arose after 1285.

(1) In France the reign of Louis IX (1226–1270) had left the Crown far stronger than it had ever been before. For one thing, St. Louis and his brother Charles had married two of the sisters of the last count of Provence, and though Henry III and his brother Richard had married the other two sisters, the entire inheritance was obtained by the French king and his brother. Another French prince had secured the heiress of Toulouse and a great inheritance, although, by a lately made treaty, much of this ought rightfully to have come to Edward I.

When Edward I went to the Crusade in 1270 he had hoped to join Louis IX. But that saintly king was already dead, and Edward took his troops on to Acre. He fought strenuously and was in much danger himself from a poisoned wound. But when Henry III died he was on his way homewards, and tried to procure a reasonable share of his rights from young Philip III. Philip had little of either the honour or the good sense of his father, Louis IX, but Edward would not, for this, shirk his own feudal duties and he performed the homage due to the French king. "Lord King," he said, "I do you homage for all the lands which I ought to hold of you."

(2) In Scotland difficulties did not begin till Alexander's death in 1286, but there was an uneasy feeling as to the future, partly

because Alexander III, like his father before him, had taken a French noblewoman for his second wife.

(3) The relations of the **Papacy** with England had become more complicated because the pope was now not only the recognised Head of the Church, but also a secular potentate who intervened in the affairs of other countries, not by any means always for the good of those countries or of the Church, but in order to obtain advantages in his own political schemes. Moreover, as the popes had for long been in fierce feud with the emperors, they usually were friendly with the kings of France. But the French king being (since 1154) the habitual enemy of the English king, this meant that in any matter which affected both the pope took the side of the king of France. He appointed, also, many French cardinals and few English, and throughout the thirteenth century treated England rather as a source of revenue than anything else. Henry III had steadily played into the hands of the pope in order to obtain papal help against his own bishops and barons. In return for the facilities he allowed to Rome for collecting money in England and bestowing English preferments upon Italians who never came to reside in this country, the pope had dealt out his commands and excommunications to suit Henry's politics. Grosseteste had been hindered in his reforms principally by papal restraint; bulls of excommunication had constantly been issued against the resisting barons, as well as against London and all the Cinque Ports, with the result that the people no longer held this sentence in great respect: "The ordering of secular matters appertaineth not to our Father the Pope," roundly replied the Londoners on one occasion, and they had the bells rung, and constrained their parish priests to say mass just as usual.

Another example of papal encroachment was in the appointing of bishops. In the twelfth century, if the king and the chapter agreed, the pope usually made no objection and, in the case of the archbishop, bestowed at once the pall. In the thirteenth century, however, John and Henry III allowed the pope to nominate some one whom the king wished to advance—one of his wife's relations or of his own chaplains. Edward I was not able to undo this system, because the last word lay with the popes, who had begun to name archbishops habitually, without heed to the king or the chapter.

A third papal encroachment had been the constant collection of taxes from the clergy, who had to tax their flocks to get the money, and the cajoling of money out of the more ignorant classes by threats or promises. This taxation was most unpopular with the better educated classes, and they sometimes succeeded, even under Henry III, in resisting it themselves.

One instance is the famous riot at Oxford (1238), when the pope had sent, contrary to the English rule, a legate to override the archbishop. His real business was to collect money. He had

quartered himself on the canons of Oseney Abbey, just outside the city. The university clergy, having sent the legate as a present an ample breakfast of meat and wine, came afterwards to pay their respects. An Italian, however, had been placed on guard who assumed that the visitors were hostile and he insolently refused to let them in. The younger clerics, indignant at his rudeness, made a rush and burst in, but the "Romans" fell upon them with sticks; and in the midst of the fray a poor Irish chaplain, who had gone to beg in the kitchen (as was customary for poor students) made the mistake of begging from the legate's brother, who was chief of his cooks, so much did he fear poison. The Italian flung a dishful of boiling water in the man's face, whereupon a clerk from the Welsh Marches, shouting "Shame! that we should put up with this!" drew his bow and discharged an arrow which shot the chief cook dead. In the tremendous uproar which followed, the legate fled to the church tower, where he barred himself in till dark and then fled for his life, nearly getting drowned in the Thames. He complained bitterly to the king and the pope, and wholesale punishment was dealt out to the University. This only increased the general discontent, and in 1245 the nobility of the realm sent a unanimous and plain-spoken remonstrance to the pope against the exactions of his agent, Master Martin, and without awaiting a reply, straightway ordered Martin to depart within three days on pain of death to all his company. In much terror Martin went to the palace to beg a safe conduct. But the king was angry at the trouble stirred up and cried in a rage—"The devil take you and give you a conduct through hell." However, he sent the marshal of the palace to take him to the coast. As they went, they came upon a small crowd busy at a sale of wood; the marshal assured Martin that they were lying in wait for him, and so, galloping for his life to Dover, Martin hurried on board a boat "and by his departure made many glad."

Such scenes ended with Henry III. Edward I never permitted similar agents to come into England. It was always possible for a king, without any open insult to the pope, to order his officials at Dover not to allow certain persons to land. The sailors were very ready to search the baggage of suspects and to persuade undesirables to return to France, in the last resort flinging them into the waves, and even compelling them to swallow the bit of parchment on which their instructions were written, seal and all.

Trouble, however, began when a Franciscan pope made another Franciscan—Peckham—archbishop, contrary to the will of both the king and the chapter of Canterbury. Well-meaning and learned as he was, his view of his duty was to be a mere mouthpiece of the pope, and his principal aim, to preserve the wealth and independence of the hierarchy, which appeared to him to be a proof of religious conviction. He began by issuing a body of exhortations and orders to the clergy in general which amounted to preaching illwill, and worse, to the king. Edward retorted (1279) by informing parlia-

ment of the archbishop's attempts to interfere in secular matters, and with the full approval of all made the statute called De Religiosis, or *Mortmain*, which enacted that no one should give lands to the Church without the permission of the donor's overlord. Efforts had already been made in this direction by Henry III and by the nobles themselves, because, as the Church "never died," there were no profits for the overlord, such as reliefs or wardships, so that noblemen and king alike were impoverished by so much land being held by ecclesiastics, for whose immunities the rest of the country had to bear an unfair burden.

Henceforth people could not bestow permanent endowments, as distinct from coin or articles of value, on the Church without a royal licence, which, if granted, had to be heavily paid for.

A direct attempt of the papacy to keep the clergy apart from and outside the nation had to be met in 1296. Pope Boniface VIII, an obstinate and almost insanely proud pontiff, had put forth a command to the clergy of Europe (known as the Bull *Clericis laicos*) forbidding them to pay money to any one for secular purposes. When, therefore, parliament, on the occasion of the Scottish and French war, voted the money for which the king asked, the clerical parliament—Convocation—had to choose between obeying the papal command or keeping the promise they had themselves made to the king, only the year before, to give as the laity did. By no means all were agreed with the new archbishop, Robert Winchelsey, but he told the royal officers that the clergy neither could nor dared give any money to the king. "We entreat you," added the archbishop candidly, "to bear this reply to the king, for we dare not speak to him ourselves." Indeed, when a deputation of clergy ventured into the royal presence, the king's aspect was so terrible that the dean of Wells fell dead from fright.

Edward replied by sending the Chief Justice to inform the clergy that henceforth they would not be heard by the judges in any court, either as plaintiffs or defendants, though justice would be done upon them, if any one should demand it. They were "outlawed."

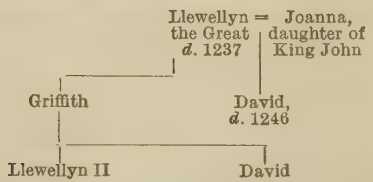
When the frightened dignitaries hurried away they found no servants or property at their lodgings; their clothes and money had been seized, and their stables emptied. Those who reached home found the royal officers in possession of their houses and lands. The whole of the archbishop's property was at once confiscated, and he had not a horse to ride on. Retiring to a country living with one faithful chaplain, Winchelsey for a time dwelt in an atmosphere of sanctity, ministering to the country-folk, who, much impressed, supported him by their offerings. He tried to compromise with the king, but Edward would yield nothing in this matter. If the pope himself, he said, had property in England, he should feel justified in taxing it for the weal of the kingdom. Meantime the rest of the bishops, many of whom opposed pope, bull and

archbishop together, were anxious to submit, and Winchelsey at length told them to make what terms they could, each for himself. Some paid openly, some said they gave the money in return for the royal protection, some laid the sum due on a table and set the door open for the officers to take it. The king did not stickle over appearances but accepted the money and "inlawed" the clergy again.

This experiment settled, in England, the question of clerical taxation. Thenceforth, when Parliament voted a grant of money, the clergy in convocation taxed themselves in due proportion to the lay tax, or even more highly, nor did the popes offer any interference. The clergy, that is, accepted a position as one of "the three estates of the realm," and the separation which the Conqueror had effected between the clergy and the rest of the nation was considerably modified.

The problem of **Wales** was twofold. Not only did the general lawlessness, which the Welsh princes called independence, mean continual outbreaks all along the boundaries—cattle-thieving, kidnapping, murders, burning of farms, and the like—and the making Wales a refuge for English law-breakers, but the feudal conditions which the English marcher lords maintained kept their lordships behind the rest of the country in order and prosperity. The earls of Chester, Hereford, Gloucester and Pembroke, the bishop of Hereford, Lord Mortimer, and other barons, exercised many rights—and often unjustly—which elsewhere the king exercised through his judges or sheriffs. The earl of Gloucester declared that the king's officers could not make a truce with a Welsh prince without his permission. Every royal castle, as well as the Forest of Dean, had a special keeper and garrison, who too often tyrannised over the population. Not a fair nor a market but was an occasion of violence. Unless everything south of the Dee and west of the Severn was to remain in the conditions of the eleventh century, Wales must be made to acknowledge the king's authority, and the Marches brought into order like the rest of England.

Under John and Henry III, Llewellyn the Great, prince of North Wales, had been really independent, treating with the king on equal



terms. He was succeeded first by his son David, then by David's nephew Llewellyn II, who made himself ruler of all Wales, and armed and trained his troops so well that he became an ally of great value to the barons during their war with Henry III. In order to make

sure of him, Simon de Montfort betrothed to him his own daughter and undertook to restore to Wales all the land recently conquered from it—chiefly by the earls of Chester and the Mortimers. The earl of Chester was then Prince Edward and the Mortimers were the principal feudal lords who were still loyal to him and to Henry III. The peace which Edward had accepted after 1267 he would not disturb by interfering with Wales, until, upon his return to England as king, he found that Llewellyn II had refused to do homage before the royal commissioners. He therefore summoned him to Chester to perform it, and, to take away any semblance of insult, went himself to receive it.

But Llewellyn sent an insolent message, refusing to come unless the king's son were sent into Wales as a hostage for his own safety, and Edward called together the nobility and informed them of the whole case. The feudal lords agreed that the king's supremacy must be maintained, and brought their troops in numbers enough to attack Wales up several of the river valleys which formed the natural roads (1277). In the lands which Montfort had taken from the Mortimers the English troops were welcomed; other forces invaded the Welsh mountainland both from Cardigan and from Chester, where Edward himself commanded. The Cinque Ports sent a fleet to the coast of Flint, so that Llewellyn was cut off from Anglesey, his usual refuge and base of supplies. A host of wood-cutters, collected from Cheshire and Shropshire, cut roads for Edward's army through the forests; as he went he re-fortified Flint and Rhuddlan, and Llewellyn, threatened with isolation and starvation, submitted.

He was generously treated. He was allowed to keep the title of Prince of Wales, forgiven the fine which was then the recognised penalty for rebellion, and though he had to come to London and perform homage, he was there wedded to Eleanor de Montfort with great magnificence at the king's cost. His brother David, who had quarrelled with him and had not joined in the rising, was also suitably rewarded with rich estates.

But the royal officers began to insist on order, and the law which they inflicted on the Welsh was the modernised English shire-law, which began to replace the antique "free" customs of the dark ages. Castles were rising at key positions, such as Carmarthen and Aberystwyth, and Llewellyn found himself prince no longer over other chiefs, but only within his own country of North Wales. He counted on the usual turbulence of the South Welsh to support a fresh rising for independence, and hoped that some of the English border lords would join him, for they too were grumbling: "the king will not let us reap our own corn nor mow our own grass," they said. Finally Edward's minting of farthing coins (to be used instead of breaking pennies to bits) convinced the Welsh that their time had really come, since Merlin had prophesied that when English money became round a prince of Wales would be crowned in London.

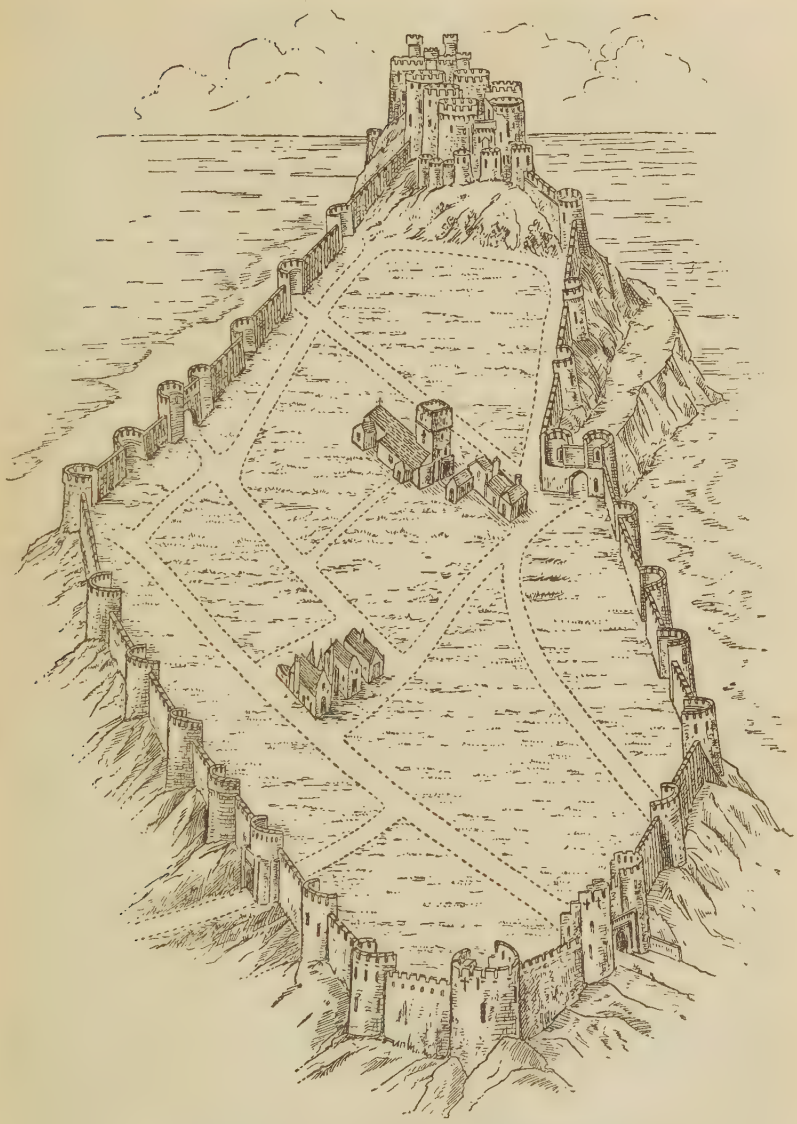
David, resentful because he had not been made prince in his brother's stead, began the outbreak (1282) with a raid on Hawarden Castle and a pitiless massacre along the border, women and children, the old and the sick, being all slain or burned in their villages. The struggle lasted throughout the year, for the whole of the Welsh were this time in arms, and one of Edward's armies, led by a Gascon, was defeated and driven into the Menai Strait. The different Marcher lords fought severally, each in his own district, and Edward had to reward them by allowing them to keep what they conquered. The king was successful in North Wales, but Llewellyn, rejecting his offers, went to the more promising south, attacking first one, then another of the barons. In a sudden skirmish, however, he was slain by a Shropshire knight (December, 1282); and David's bands were tracked down one by one, till his own followers at last betrayed him (1283). The effort for Welsh independence then collapsed, as an attempt to preserve an ancient and savage system must do beside a progressive neighbour; and Edward called a parliament to meet first at Shrewsbury, then at Acton Burnell, in which David was tried by four judges before a council of nobles, and sentenced to die (an unusual penalty for treason) by a horrible death as a threefold criminal—traitor, blasphemer and murderer. Moreover, Merlin's prophecy was fulfilled by sending Llewellyn's head on the point of a lance, crowned with a silver garland, to London, where it was exposed at the Tower.

This grim custom of the Middle Ages was not a mere bit of brutality, but a useful proof to the people of the death of the conquered, that they might not believe rumours of his having escaped and being in hiding, such as were commonly put about in days when there was little means of spreading news except by word of mouth.

After this the king incorporated Wales with England, and it was largely ruled by the English system of government. This was accomplished by making most of the districts of Wales into shires, with sheriffs and shire-courts. But to keep order there were also special judges; and a chain of castles of the most advanced military type was established in key positions, such as Aberconway, opposite the valley road into Snowdonia, Carmarthen, Kidwelly, and other ports and passes.

At the same time, the Welsh Church was confided to the care of the archbishop of Canterbury, who tried to get the clergy to accept a better education and stricter discipline; but though he got many churches built he had little success in persuading the Welsh to prefer English ways to their own. Future trouble would come from the Marcher lords, who had to be left in possession of their peculiar independence.

In **England,** the first need was to check the encroachments of the feudal lords on the authority of the Crown and the liberties



PLAN OF CONWAY CASTLE, BUILT BY EDWARD I.
(Based on an illustration in Clarke's *Medieval Military Architecture*.)

of the people. Edward ordered a national record to be taken (1274–1278) of the ownership, jurisdiction, privileges and duties of every lord, hundred, and manor (*Rotuli Hundredorum*)—a kind of new edition of Doomsday. The lords were alarmed and the story of Warenne, earl of Surrey, is famous. Instead of royal charters he produced a rusty old sword and proclaimed, "My ancestors came over with William the Bastard" (a glaring falsehood, they dated from Henry II), "and conquered their lands by the sword (equally false) and by the sword I will hold them against all who seek them." It was a capital story: but for one earl there were thousands of freeholders. Edward made a statute in Parliament (1278) to protect the lords from being fined for past encroachments, then precise inquiries were resumed:—By what warrant (*Quo warranto*) did each lord claim what he claimed? They began with Warenne, who dutifully sent his representatives to prove his claims.

After the annexation of Wales, Edward appeared to be so far secure in England that he went abroad for three years to put Gascony in order and prepare for the Crusade which it was always his dream to accomplish. For this purpose he had been storing up money, with the aid of the pope and the clergy, which he kept in the strongly fortified house of the Knights Templars in London. But a much more difficult task was that of settling the affairs of France and other foreign neighbours on so peaceful a basis as to make it safe for him to leave them. The rival claimants to the crown of Sicily, French and Spanish, invited Edward I to arbitrate, but twice, when he succeeded in making an arrangement which both were willing to accept, the pope annulled it. In the meantime a new king of France had succeeded, Philip IV (le Bel), and homage and other points had to be settled. Finally, news came from England of widespread injustice and rapacity on the part of the royal officers, especially the chief judges, and of grave disorders.

The earls of Gloucester and Hereford were at open war with each other, and when a parliament was assembled to hear the king's message requiring money, Gloucester declared that no money should be paid till Englishmen again saw the king's face. Edward was constrained to put off the Crusade and come home (1289), when the chief justice revealed his own guilt by fleeing into sanctuary. Several judges were dismissed, and the two earls were severely dealt with, as an example. Gloucester, the more offending, was "honoured" by being married to the king's daughter and was made to resign all his estates on the occasion, to prove his loyalty, receiving them back from the king *entailed*: that is, only his male descendants could inherit them, so that in the event of there being no son they would escheat back to the king. It was a part of Edward's policy thus to limit inheritances, so that no great fief might continue for ever a separate unit, and he made it the law by the statute *De Donis*, which allowed any one to tie, or entail, a grant of land in this way

(1285). The lords were quite willing for the change, since in the same way they might inherit estates escheating from their own subtenants. The statute *Quia emptores* was another and more effectual step in the same direction (1290). This ordered that if a lord sold a part of his estate the buyer should "hold" it from the seller's overlord, thus every sale put the overlordship a step further back, till in the end the king was reached once more, a system which prevented sub-infeudation, the complications of which, in other countries, resulted in great disorder. This new rule was also made with the full consent of the great lords, who benefited to begin with, but it dealt a death-blow to the old feudalism in England by breaking the chain of holders and causing even small properties to be held of the Crown, which soon came to much the same thing as the ancient folk-land, and later on was regarded as freehold.

Another change which the king made at this time was extremely popular. He had tried to abolish one cause of discontent and ruin by forbidding the Jews to practise usury; they then took to clipping and melting coins. He had already banished them from Aquitaine, now he banished them from England also (1290). Great was the relief of the people, clergy or laity, rich or poor. Some cruelty and injustice was committed by the officials and sailors who had to see to their departure, but these the king punished, and most of the Jews were able to take their money with them, as the king expressly ordered. Edward himself was the principal loser, no longer drawing a revenue from their fines and taxes.

After this the banking business of the nation was left in the hands either of native merchants and goldsmiths, or of Italian business houses (Lombards), who had been gradually taking over the public (that is, royal) finances during the thirteenth century. Edward was always deep in debt, owing to his Crusade, and the wasteful method of "farming" the customs and taxes contributed to his want of success in his large plans for Scotland and France after 1290.

The year 1290—the year of the death of Queen Eleanor of Castile and of Bishop Burnell—divides the reign of Edward I into two sections. Up to that year he had been signally successful; from that year the various threads of interest—the French and Scottish wars, Welsh risings, feudal and clerical disaffection—intertwine to form one story of opposition and difficulty with which the king must cope, with varying success, to the end of his life.

LEGISLATION OF EDWARD I

1275. Statute of Westminster I: System of Henry II and Richard I brought up to date. Common Law for all.
1278. Statute of Gloucester. Feudal privileges reduced by writs *Quo warranto*. Distraint of Knighthood.

1279. Statute *de Religiosis* or *Mortmain* (at Reading). Religious ownership not to exempt land from its duties.
1283. Statute of Merchants (at Acton Burnell). The law-courts are to help merchants to get debts and bills paid.
1284. Statute of Wales (at Rhuddlan).
1285. Statute of Vestminster II: *De donis* and other land laws [basis of our land law till nineteenth century]. Justices of assize increased.
1285. Statute of Winchester. Local police system (Hundreds, hue and cry, watch and ward, use of weapons, etc.), brought up to date.
1290. Statute of *Quia emptores* (at Westminster) simplifies land-holding.
1294. Great taxation voted (at Westminster), half from clergy, one-sixth from cities and boroughs, one-tenth from country laity.
1297. *Confirmatio Cartarum:* king not to increase the "great custom" on wool, wool-fells and leather, or the prisage of wine.
1300. *Articuli super Cartas:* Common Pleas and Exchequer to abide at Westminster, Chancery and King's Bench to travel with the king.
1303. *Carta Mercatoria:* new extra grant (*parva custuma*) given on wool, fells and hides, a duty on exported cloth and wax; 2*s.* per cask of wine, 3*d.* per £ on value of other imports or exports.
[The model for customs till 1642.]

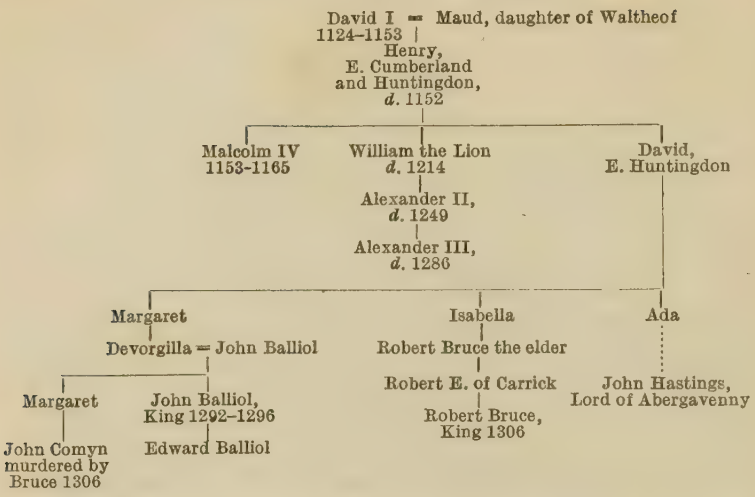
XXIII

EDWARD I AND SCOTLAND

When in 1286 Alexander III had been accidentally killed his heir was Margaret of Norway, his sole grandchild. It was not easy to fetch an infant so far, nor was Eric, the king of Norway, very willing to allow his motherless child to risk such a journey. The Scots therefore appointed a Regency of two bishops and four lords, and sent the bishop of St. Andrews to visit Edward I, who was then in Gascony, to get his assistance. When Edward returned to England in 1289 a fresh embassy from the regents visited him, and arranged that their little queen should marry the heir of England, Edward of Carnarvon, a child of about her own age. In this manner the two sister kingdoms might be united perpetually in a peaceful alliance.

Next year a Scottish parliament met at Brigham, near the border, and drew up a treaty to define the conditions of the alliance, and to safeguard the independence and freedom of Scotland. Edward I was to have the care of Margaret's education, and he sent a picked ship to fetch her from Norway, fitted up with all that could be thought of for her safety and comfort, including toys. Unhappily her father's fears proved to be justified; the voyage was stormy, and the child became so ill that the captain put into harbour at the Orkney Isles, but there she died, and Scotland had to face a disputed succession.

The nearest heirs of Alexander III were now the descendants of the three daughters of David, earl of Huntingdon. But it was an open question whether the grandson of the eldest (John Balliol), or the son of the second (Robert Bruce of Annandale) should be regarded as nearest of kin to Alexander III. The grandson of the third daughter, Lord Hastings of Abergavenny, claimed that the kingdom should be treated as an ordinary fief and divided among the heirs. This might open the way to a number of claimants, and some two dozen lords put in demands for fractions of Alexander's kingdom. To avoid anarchy the representatives of Scotland begged the king of England to arbitrate on the various claims. As Bruce had been a trusted vassal of Edward's he probably reckoned on special favour. All the three chief claimants held English as well as Scottish fiefs, and Balliol and Bruce had been for some years at feud.



At Edward's invitation a large body of representatives of Scotland came to Norham Castle (1291), where Edward met them with a company of English nobles and judges. The king asked whether the representatives recognised him as overlord of Scotland. After considering together, certain that otherwise he would not act, they replied that they did. He then asked for the proof of recognition usual in those times—the cession to him of their castles during the arbitration, promising to render them back to the new king. This was the best way of ensuring tranquillity and of guaranteeing the national acceptance of the new king, and was at once granted.

Edward set out immediately for a journey through the Scottish lowlands, as far as to Stirling and St. Andrews, and placed garrisons in the castles, while the body of judges to whom he entrusted the choice of the king was assembling at Berwick.

It was composed of eighty Scots and twenty-four Englishmen, who gave their decision, in Edward's presence, in November 1292, when they announced that the kingdom could by no means be divided, and that the succession, according to the laws of England and Scotland, must be by strict rule of primogeniture. John Balliol was, therefore, declared king, and to him Edward at once directed the castles to be delivered up. As soon as he had been crowned at Scone, King John came to perform homage to the king of England at Newcastle (Christmas 1292), and almost immediately it was evident that causes of quarrel would arise as freely as in earlier days.

As in the time of William the Lion, the Scots—nobles, clergy or burghers—resented the carrying out in practice of the treaty made by their representatives and their king. On the other hand, Edward, himself scrupulous in fulfilling his feudal duty to the king of France,

even to his own loss, was as exact in requiring all feudal service due to himself. As he had throughout clearly stated his claim to full suzerainty, and had met with no denial, he considered any attempts to avoid the consequences as deliberate treachery. There were many persons in Scotland, from Macduff, earl of Fife, to private burgesses of Berwick, who, mistrustful of the law-courts of their new king, wished to procure in their own affairs the well-known justice of the English king, and these appealed from Scottish tribunals to Edward, exactly as an English subject might do. Such appeal to the supreme lord was wholly in accordance with the feudal usage of the age. Edward's Gascon subjects frequently called upon the king of France without hindrance. But it was, of course, a novelty in Scotland, where it was resented, and King John was despised for admitting it.

In 1294 the more independent nobles resolved to control the royal action by a committee of themselves, such as had formerly been attempted in England by the Provisions of Oxford. The committee did its best to sever by force the tie of the overlordship, first by expelling those barons who were Englishmen, including the earl of Carrick, Robert Bruce the younger, who had just succeeded his father, the claimant, and next, by making an alliance with the king of France, who was at war with Edward I (1295).

From this moment the questions at issue between England and Scotland became a part of the Anglo-French struggle in war and politics, and so were destined to remain until a personal union of the two crowns was at length accomplished when James VI of Scotland became James I of England.

Under Philip IV, a king who became notorious for his unscrupulous use of falsehood and violence to obtain his ends, the long tension between England and France was suddenly turned into war by the turbulent sailors of the Cinque Ports and of Normandy. At first the Normans won, and they paraded the Channel in triumph, with the bodies of slain English seamen dangling from their yards, each with a dead dog strung up beside him as a sign of contempt. The French king would take no steps to keep his subjects in order, so the English fishing fleet put to sea with the intention of settling the quarrel, and a fierce fight took place, Irish and Gascon ships taking the English side, and some Genoese the French side, and the men of the Cinque Ports finally put their enemies to flight. Philip promptly summoned Edward to Paris, as a rebellious vassal. Edward replied that he was not a vassal for the kingdom of England, but that he was willing to make amends for the misdoings of his subjects, and he sent his brother Edmund, earl of Lancaster, to negotiate. Philip professed to fear rebellion in the south of France and required Edward to place the castles of Gascony in his hands for a period as proof of loyalty. This Edward loyally performed, whilst Edmund was busy drawing up with the French king a formal treaty. Suddenly Philip repeated his

summons to the king of England to appear at Paris, declared him a rebellious vassal whose fiefs were forfeited, and hurried troops into Gascony, where his possession of the castles enabled him quickly to secure the greater part of the duchy (1294), at the very moment when a formidable Welsh rebellion compelled Edward to lead thither most of the army he had hastily raised to succour Gascony. Under such circumstances the alliance between France and Scotland could have only one meaning, and open war with the latter began in 1295.

The Scots were first in the field. Two savage armies attacked the north of England, well worth plundering after so long a peace, slew, plundered and burnt, and dispersed homewards: "they surpassed the cruelty of the heathen, for not being able to seize upon the strong they wreaked their vengeance upon the weak, the decrepit and the young."

Edward sent out a summons for a parliament to meet at Carlisle, which had beaten off the invaders, and at once marched upon Berwick with strong forces, vowing to "return their mischief upon their own heads." Great and wealthy port as Berwick was, it was ill fortified and worse defended. But the citizens infuriated Edward by ribald insults, and "like a boar hindered with the hounds" he led the assault, pressing his charger first up the bank. The citizens deserted the walls in panic, the garrison saved their own lives by a prompt surrender, and the only resistance was made by a band of Flemish settlers, who defended their fortified factory to the last. The king ordered that women should be spared, but left his troops to massacre the rest as they would till the streets ran with blood. At length a courageous band of priests came before Edward, bearing the Host and chanting a litany, to implore his mercy. Then, bursting into tears, he stopped the slaughter.

Before leaving the ruined city he devised the fortifications which were to make it almost impregnable, himself wheeling the first barrow-load of earth. Here he received Balliol's formal renunciation of homage. "The silly fool!" cried Edward; "if he will not come to me, I must to him." Marching on the road to Edinburgh the invaders were met by the Scottish army near Dunbar. Balliol's knights came on in a disorderly rush and were as quickly routed.

After this, all the fortified places, from Roxburgh to Perth, surrendered almost as soon as the English army appeared, so that men said that the king had "conquered the realm of Scotland and searched it out in twenty-one weeks."

Balliol had already submitted, and resigned his crown into Edward's hands.

Such rapid success caused Edward to suppose that Scotland was really conquered, and he treated it as a forfeited fief, much as Philip IV was treating Gascony. He proclaimed "the king's peace," placed three English officials in charge as guardian (or vice-regent), treasurer and justiciar, and accepted the homage of the feudal

barons. Then he went back to England, leaving behind him only a few garrisons and a bodyguard for the Guardian, the faithful Warenne, earl of Surrey, a baron of Yorkshire, like Balliol and Bruce. He took with him the regalia from Edinburgh and the famous stone of coronation from Scone. Balliol was sent into private life on a pleasant estate in the south of England.

The Scottish war had, however, consumed all the money and supplies got together for Gascony, and Edward was obliged to provide a third time for his French fief. In response to his demand for money in 1296, parliament voted a considerable supply, but the clergy, through Archbishop Winchelsey, refused, as has already been described. While Edward was in process of bringing them to submission, he called a parliament at Salisbury, and requested the feudal lords to collect their forces, that the hereditary generals, the constable and the marshal (Bohun, earl of Hereford, and Bigod, earl of Norfolk), might lead them to Gascony, while the king himself attacked by way of Flanders. The count of Flanders was just then a vassal and ally of the king of France, but the citizens of Ghent and Bruges were in revolt against their French count and ready to ally with Edward, especially as English wool was a prime necessity for them.

The constable and the marshal, however, suddenly refused to go: their tenure of their fiefs, said Norfolk, did not bind them to go abroad without the king. This was a mere quibble, and the king in wrath cried: "By God, Sir Earl, you shall go or hang." "By the same oath, Lord King," retorted the earl, "I will neither go nor hang," and with many others he departed, to collect troops indeed, but by no means to lead them to the ports. The fate of Gascony was trembling in the balance, and the king refused to be hindered either by feudal defiance or by the news which came from Scotland of a revolt raised by a bold outlaw, William Wallace. It was the earl of Surrey's business to deal with this, and Edward left it to him, while he procured stores for his troops by steps unknown hitherto during his just and orderly reign, seizing on all the wool and skins which were ready for export, and ordering the sheriffs to buy up as purveyance a great supply of wheat, oats and salted meat from the farms in their counties. Many men were only paid in "tallies"—the marked wooden sticks of the Exchequer—but they knew that the tallies would in time be redeemed with coin, and obeyed. The wool merchants had to redeem their sacks with a very heavy toll, which was called the *male tolte* or evil tax.[1] By this time the clergy had given in, the archbishop only stipulating that the king should publicly confirm the Charters, *i.e.*, Magna Carta (as revised in 1225) and the Forest Charter. This was a concession to his dignity, an acknowledgment that the king had been formally in the wrong, and Edward consented and addressed

[1] The rhyme *Baa, baa, blacksheep,* is supposed to be a relic of a popular ballad on this, the *little boy in the lane* being the king, or his wool-factor.

a vast crowd at Westminster, asking them to pardon him for having ruled less well than he should, but declaring that he had had to take a portion of the national wealth in order to save the whole. Not one of his hearers but must have known the truth of this, for the importance of the Gascony trade in wine, oil and wool, was familiar in every port and market. "I am going to put myself in jeopardy for you," said the king, "and I pray you, if I come back, to receive me well, and I will give you back all I have taken from you; but if I do not come back, then crown this my son your king." With shouts of enthusiasm and even in tears, as were the archbishop and the king himself, the people held up their right hands in token of renewed homage, and vowed to do as he bade them. And Edward hurried to embark for Flanders, leaving the prince, a boy of fourteen, with wise guardians, to sign the Charters on the royal behalf, as promised.

But the two earls, who cared as little for the nation or for Gascony as for their vows of fealty, used the great body of troops under their orders, not to go to Gascony or to Scotland, but to overawe the sheriffs of London and prevent the taxes already voted from being collected. The archbishop played into their hands; the king, he suggested, had promised to ratify the two Charters; let some additional articles be added to each, by way of explanation: to the one (Magna Carta) a precise note that the Crown should never take a tax, a duty, or a tallage without parliament's consent, and should abolish the new "male tolte;" to the Forest Charter, clauses disforesting many tracts and transferring them to the hands of the nobles. (*Tallage* was the tax the king sometimes levied on the towns upon the royal demesne.) Moreover, a great part of the clerical payments, which came into the archbishop's own hands, he actually paid to the pope, to whom he owed a huge debt.

Just as the prince's guardians were realising that they were helpless before the feudal troops which filled London, there came the news that the disregarded Scottish outlaw, Wallace, had won a striking victory at Cambuskenneth (1297), had slain the treasurer Cressingham, and had driven Warenne himself to headlong flight. They gave in, therefore, to the earls and the archbishop, accepted the fresh articles and sent them to Ghent, where the king agreed to them (*Confirmatio Cartarum*, 1297). But, to his intense mortification, his plan for attacking France had been entirely ruined by the delays caused by this opposition at home, for his Flemish and German allies, left unaided, had made their own treaty with Philip. Even the fleet was in disorder, the Yarmouth sailors fighting the men of the Cinque Ports, so that Edward was compelled to sign a truce and return home to deal with the Scottish surprise.

Wherever Edward could himself command, all went well. In 1298 Wallace was defeated at Falkirk and fled to France; but the king could not remain in Scotland, and the Scottish nobles and great

men tried to save their country's independence by making Balliol's nephew Comyn—who had never submitted—regent in his name. It took several years to reduce the land to submission, and during that time Edward lived in the north; the courts and government departments were established at York, and parliaments were called to Lincoln (1301) or Carlisle (1303, 1307). The king was hindered, first, by the feudal lords who, not content with having caused the loss of Gascony, refused, at Lincoln, to join in the Scottish campaigns unless the new clauses of the Charters were confirmed more fully; and next, by the skilful policy of the Scots, who offered their country as a fief to the pope. Not that this had any actual effect; the ambitious Boniface VIII indeed accepted the gift, and ordered Archbishop Winchelsey to forbid the English king to go further. But the parliament of Lincoln promptly supported Edward, saying that the king of England had never been answerable to the pope, and " should he wish to be, we would not suffer him;" while the archbishop, who bravely insisted on delivering his message, found it amazingly difficult to track the king in the Scottish lowlands; and when at last he was allowed to reach the camp, and read to him the scripturally expressed letter of the pope, Edward merely replied that " neither Zion nor Jerusalem " should prevent him from pursuing his rights.

This was the first time of parliament taking a step of definite resistance to the papacy; an action which it was frequently to repeat, and that as early as 1307, when the Carlisle parliament made a list of the pope's encroachments on the freedom of the English Church and people, declaring that he treated England as Nebuchadnezzar did Jerusalem, and requested the king to legislate against this tyranny.

In 1303, Edward's perseverance at last seemed to have attained success in both Scotland and France. Philip IV withdrew from Gascony, at the price of a double marriage, Edward marrying Philip's sister Margaret, while his heir, Edward of Carnarvon, was betrothed to Philip's daughter Isabella. In the same year, the king reduced the principal fortresses of Scotland, Wallace was caught and executed, and Comyn, with the principal nobles, swore fealty to Edward. Already the English nobility had witnessed the royal triumph over the two rebellious families of Bigod and Bohun. The earl of Norfolk had to surrender his lands and receive them back on the new entailed conditions, which, as he had no son, meant that on his death they escheated to the king, who bestowed them on the infant son of his second marriage, Thomas of Brotherton, while the Bigods, bereft of their whole resources, disappeared. Bohun had died, leaving a son, but he was obliged to marry the king's daughter Joan, so that the Hereford and Norfolk earldoms both were absorbed by the royal family. On Archbishop Winchelsey, too, fell retribution. The next pope had once been archbishop of Edward's loyal city of Bordeaux, and to please his old sovereign

he suspended the archbishop of Canterbury and gave Edward absolution from his oath to disforest his lands, so that he resumed most of his compulsory grants, to the great satisfaction of the poorer class, who had found the nobles much worse masters than the king. Finally, the necessary taxation was voted by parliament (1303) on a wide basis, which, a little later, was taken as a model of permanent customs and wool taxes.

Scotland should now, Edward determined, become a true part of his dominions, as had Wales. He intended to rule it by its own parliament, but that this body should send some representatives to London, and by its own laws, but that the wild local customs of the Highlands and Strathclyde should disappear. Comyn, lately the leader of the Balliol party, was now convinced that resistance was vain, and willing to accept the situation; but the Bruce party had a new leader in the young and ambitious earl of Carrick, grandson of the original claimant, a nobleman hitherto apparently perfectly loyal and content at the English court, and who had been favoured and trusted by Edward, who was unaware that he had been privately intriguing with certain Scottish magnates to secure the crown himself. Enticing Comyn, Balliol's nephew and representative, to Dumfries, in his own earldom of Carrick, Bruce picked a quarrel with him before the altar of the Greyfriars' church, and suddenly stabbed him; then he hurried to Scone, where his fellow-conspirators were ready, and was crowned king (1306).

When this news reached London the old king held a great meeting, and at the feast knighted his son Edward, and two hundred other young esquires, and then publicly took a solemn oath " over the swans " that he would never rest till Scotland was at peace and Bruce, perjuror, traitor, murderer and church desecrator, was punished; and so vowed they all.

With a splendid army the old king set out for the Border, where parliament assembled at Carlisle (see above), but he had to be carried on a litter from weakness, for he was ill.

Already Bruce's troops had been defeated and he had fled, " a summer king," men said, when Edward, having reached Lanercost Priory, by the Roman wall, had himself lifted on horseback and rode a few miles, only to breathe his last at Burgh, by the Solway sands, in sight of Scotland (July 1307).

XXIV

ENGLAND IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

(i) The Church, Education, Building (1215–1314)

The thirteenth century, which, for England in particular, may be reckoned as from Magna Carta to Bannockburn, was the most brilliant epoch of the Middle Ages.

Ideas long buried were awakened; everywhere the arts of building, carving in stone or wood, painting, and in Italy poetry, reached the loftiest heights. The science of medicines and mathematics were approached; a better agriculture improved the supply of food, and population and industry increased. In Italy, St. Francis revealed anew the spirit of Christianity; the French had been made the leading nation in the sphere of chivalry by the Crusades. Through the Crusaders the wares, and something of the skill, of the East reached the cities of Italy and France; and pilgrims, nobles and men of learning flocked thither, as well as merchants, to find fresh teaching of all kinds, and books, utensils, or tools, as well as rare luxuries. The popes by their legal decisions were making Rome a kind of arbitration centre; the cloth-making cities of Flanders, and the merchant cities of the Rhine and of Germany, were attaining their prime. In England also a new and reforming intellectual movement was active.

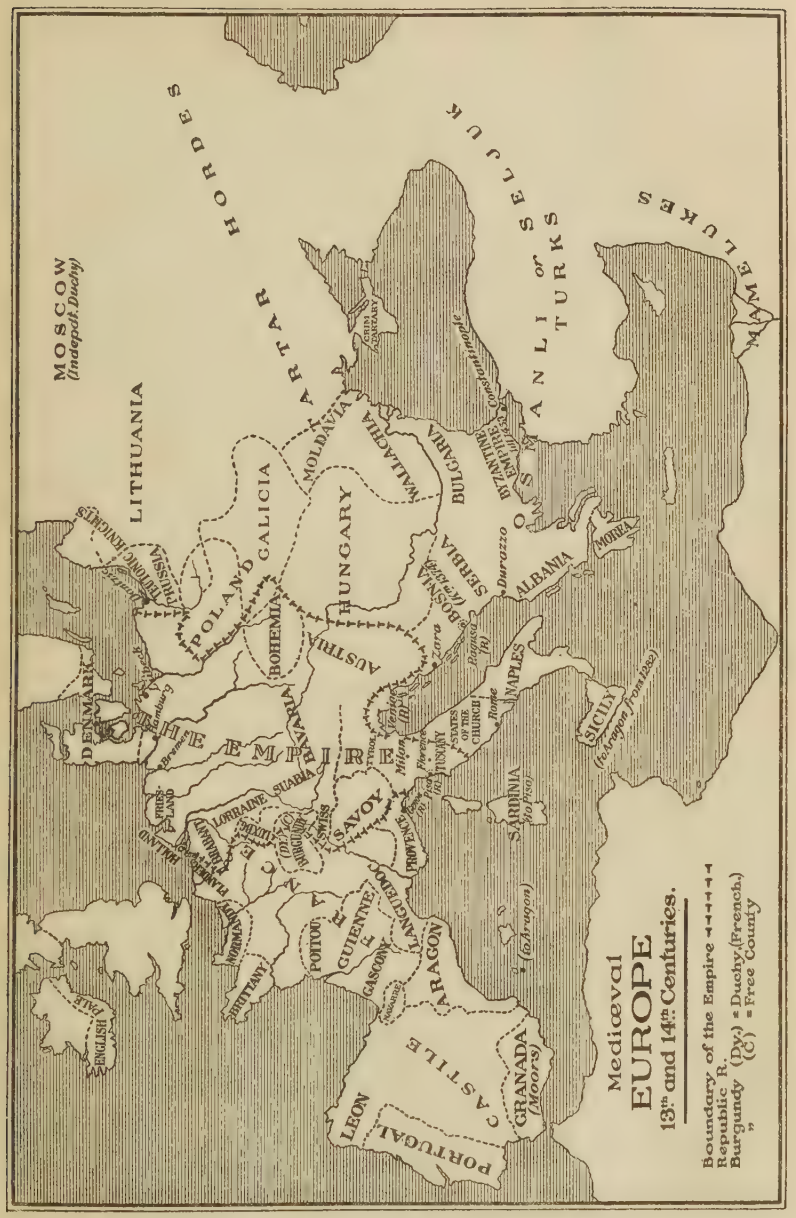
On all sides of her national life England gained by the increased intercourse with the continent due to the Plantagenets. Merchants and pilgrims, nobles and adventurers, bishops and clergy and monks, students and messengers, were continually travelling to Paris, either to study at the University or to attend the great French fairs in Champagne. Or they journeyed to Rome along the highway through the breadth of France, which in the thirteenth century again displaced the Normandy-Aquitaine route of the previous age, going from Paris by Auxerre to Lyon and the Savoy passes over the Alps. And as they went they beheld the glorious cathedrals rising at Amiens, Rheims, and Paris; the vast and splendid buildings of many a monastery which entertained them, night after night; the paved cities of Italy, full of stone-built houses, where, as at Pisa and Florence, some of the most perfect buildings of the world were being completed.

New knowledge came back to England of things which might be, and men's minds were stirred and sharpened.

The struggle for power which was continually raging between the king and the barons was the least remarkable movement of this age, as far as the English nation was concerned. Even in the political sphere, however, the thirteenth century saw changes which resulted in making larger numbers of men take part in the task of government, and so the foundations were laid of the English system of self-government, in parliament and in smaller assemblies, and under the three Edwards the outlines of the system which has served us ever since, and which was a model for other countries, were practically completed.

Both in country and town the thirteenth century saw a much needed reform and fresh impulses in religious life. When Archbishop Langton came back to England after his enforced exile, he brought a programme of reform in Church matters, ordered by the pope in the Lateran Council of 1215. (1) The superstitious appeal to *ordeals* was forbidden. (2) The fashion of endowing abbeys with parish churches had caused a terrible neglect of the parishes, and heathenism was the real condition of vast districts in the country: the bishops, therefore, were empowered to see that the abbeys placed *vicars* to reside in the parishes, and allowed them enough of the tithes to ensure them a decent living. This could not be done before, because many abbeys had obtained from Rome the privilege of being outside episcopal control, and subject only to the pope himself. As clerical incomes partly consisted in the fees and gifts paid by the laity at weddings, christenings, and especially at burials, the monks did not encourage the building of new churches. For instance, although in the vast parish attached to the village of Manchester the secular clergy of the parish church had built a chapel (that is, a church with no parish belonging to it) at Didsbury on the edge of the parish, so that the people there might have all the church's services, yet in the crowded city of Northampton, the abbey of St. Andrew's, which owned all the churches, forbade the vicars who served them to officiate in the chapels which the citizens had built, nor could anybody else officiate. This was because the gifts would then have gone to the vicars, who were much more popular among the townsmen than the haughty abbot. A monk's sole thought was now the wealth or power of his abbey, which had become to him the symbol of religion.

In consequence, when the new orders of *Friars* reached England early in the thirteenth century, they found a limitless sphere of work, and their coming began a much-needed reformation. The name of St. Francis, the founder of the best-loved order, is famous all over Europe. He was the son of an Italian noble, but gave up every worldly tie and possession in order to dedicate himself to the service of God and—this was the new light which he revealed to the men of the Middle Ages—to serve Him by helping mankind. Without either blaming the monks, whose ideal was to glorify God and sanctify their own


Mediæval
EUROPE
13th and 14th Centuries.
Boundary of the Empire
Republic R.
Burgundy (Dy.) = Duchy (French.)
(C.) = Free County
MOSCOW
(Indepdt. Duchy)
LITHUANIA
TARTARS
HORDES
OTTOMAN TURKS
SELJUK
MAMELUKES
POLAND
GALICIA
MOLDAVIA
WALLACHIA
BULGARIA
HUNGARY
BOHEMIA
AUSTRIA
SERBIA
BOSNIA
ALBANIA
MOREA
DENMARK
THE EMPIRE
BAVARIA
SUABIA
LORRAINE
SAVOY
NAPLES
SICILY
SARDINIA
CHURCH
STATES OF THE
FRISIA
HOLLAND
BRABANT
FLANDERS
NORMANDY
BRITTANY
POITOU
GUIENNE
GASCONY
LANGUEDOC
PROVENCE
ARAGON
CASTILE
LEON
PORTUGAL
GRANADA
(Moors)
ENGLAND
WALES
SCOTLAND
IRELAND

souls by constant worship, or attacking the secular clergy, whose duty it was to conduct the offices of the Church for their parishioners, St. Francis taught by his own deeds that man's love to God could be shown in teaching the Word of the Gospel to the ignorant, in nursing the sick, in succouring the poor and, in sum, in ministering to all the needs of his fellow-men and women. His wonderful life of purity and love revealed Christianity to great and small. From the pope, the cardinal, and the king of France, to the beggars, all were convinced. Louis IX craved his blessing, murderers and robbers repented; crowds of young men of all ranks begged to follow his example. Even animals and birds came at his call.

St. Francis, like St. Bernard before him, thought that the love of wealth was the principal cause of evil and of the low standard of the churchmen. He therefore decreed that his friars should possess nothing. The monks also professed to possess nothing personally, but the abbey could possess everything. The Cistercians, St. Bernard's Order, had got over their vows of poverty by naming the Order as the possessor of lands and flocks; but the followers of Francis were forbidden to take this method; they were literally to beg their food and needful clothing from the charitable. He sent them in small companies to evangelise the world, and wherever they came they preached, and nursed the sick and poor, not shrinking from the most repulsive diseases. A little party reached Canterbury in 1224, and from there the Order rapidly spread over England. They called themselves the Little Brothers, Friars Minor, Minorites, but they were generally called, in England, the Grey Friars.

Another order of wandering and begging brethren, formed just before the Franciscans, was the Order of Dominicans, or Preaching Friars (the Black Friars). Their founder, St. Dominic, seeing that heresy was spreading especially in Italy and Provence, thought that the right way of meeting false principles was to teach better ones. He therefore intended his Order to be learned and eloquent. It was not, in that age, considered at all a necessary part of a parish priest's duty to preach, and in fact many of them were too ignorant to do so.

In England, the gap which had existed for a century and a half after the Conquest, between the hierarchy and the poor parish clergy, had resulted in a decline in education. The bishops had been, in many cases, occupied in statesmanlike cares for the king and his government. Monks were becoming absorbed in the care of property, and in lawsuits and business of all kinds. The schools were scantily attended, although, especially where the old cathedrals and minsters were still in the charge of canons, they seem to have gone on teaching, and the abbeys maintained students at Oxford and Cambridge.

The friars brought a welcome reinforcement to the efforts which, in the thirteenth century, were made by Archbishop Langton, Archbishop Edmund Rich, Robert Grosseteste (bishop of Lincoln),

St. Richard of Chichester and a few other high-minded prelates. During the ten years of Langton's activity, he began to establish vicars in all parishes which had not resident rectors. But there were not enough clergy to repair the neglect of the past century. Grosseteste, who after Langton's death was practically the leader of the English Church, aimed at supplementing the parochial organisation by founding houses of Franciscan Friars. Their especial duty was to teach and preach and, when the pope decreed that confession of sins was a duty binding on all, and that every one must confess at least once a year, the bishops arranged to give authority to friars of sufficient character and learning to hear confessions. This duty involved moral teaching, imposing of penances suited to the wrong done, and giving absolution to the penitent. Often people preferred making confession to a visiting Grey friar rather than to the parish priest, to whose silence they could not trust.

The Grey Friars were no mere wandering beggars. They were carefully organised under a General, under whom there was a separate Superior for each kingdom. England, with southern Scotland, was divided into seven districts, and the houses of the friars were established in the principal towns. Altogether there were nearly sixty houses by A.D. 1300, and from each centre the route of the travelling Brothers who were to preach and hear confession was exactly arranged. If the parson of the village invited them they would officiate in the church, otherwise in the churchyard, preaching from the cross. In the extensive parishes of the north they officiated in the open air, where the ruined wayside crosses still mark ancient places of assembly.

The friars won universal respect by their fearlessness and disinterestedness. When Henry III sent them a waggon-load of grey cloth, and they discovered that he had procured it from some merchants whom he had not paid, they refused to keep it, but sent back waggon and all. When Edward I, on an occasion of a great gathering, ordered his household officers to provide food for the friars for the three days of their assembly, they would only accept one day's food, because some nobles had already sent them enough for two days. The great sought to obtain friars as chaplains, an office which they did not refuse and in which they often exercised very great influence. Even the iron-tempered Edward I listened to the Dominican friar who was his confessor.

They were the champions of the poor against oppression, and not seldom found themselves opposed to the monks of some powerful abbey, so that there came to be little love lost between monks and friars. They even had the courage to oppose the mobs who, in 1256, carried out cruel persecutions of the Jews, although they risked their popularity thereby.

The work of the friars in education was remarkable. England became their most learned province, and from Oxford, Cambridge,

or Stamford—this last being their own special place of study—they carried learning to the continent. Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, their first patron, was himself a profound and venturesome scholar who contrived to learn Greek and Hebrew, and led the way to studying mathematics. Mathematics led to astronomy and physics. A Greek whom Grosseteste brought to Lincoln compiled the first Greek dictionary, and a Greek grammar was composed by Roger Bacon, a Franciscan Friar. This famous man was apparently the first in medieval times to observe natural phenomena and to reason from them. He discovered much of the laws of light and mechanics, and perhaps of electricity. He found out how to make telescope lenses and how to compound a first-rate gunpowder, the use of which in warfare he foresaw.

But the most usual branch of study for the friars was, naturally, theology, which then occupied the place in education that the classics did in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It covered many branches of learning, and included simple scriptural narrative and profound philosophy. The favourite medieval Encyclopædia (*De proprietatibus rerum*) was composed in the middle of the thirteenth century by a Grey Friar, Bartholomæus Anglicus, an Englishman, who had become a theological professor at Paris. He piled together all the correct theories and orthodox knowledge, true or imaginary, about almost all things which might be useful to students—holding that Holy Scripture could not be understood without a general knowledge of other sciences. All kinds of examples and stories, from history and legend, and what was supposed to be natural history, were used by the friars in their sermons. A good instance of the kind of argument that would be considered very telling is the speech about the bees, which Shakespere puts into the mouth of the archbishop in *King Henry V*, which really comes from this encyclopædia of Bartholomew the Englishman.

Before Grosseteste became bishop of Lincoln he was chancellor of the University of Oxford, and himself lectured to the Oxford Friars in order to train them as teachers of the clergy. He had seen the ignorance of the clergy and the heathenism of the people when, as an archdeacon, he had been in charge of the churches of Wiltshire, Cheshire and Northamptonshire in turns, and he found the friars able and eager to help in this crying need. In a short time they had thirty lecturers regularly training friars to be priests, preachers, and confessors, and often the other (or secular) clergy attended their lectures.

Three of the most powerful thinkers of the age, Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus and William of Ockham, were English Grey Friars.

Unhappily the Roman Church and even the chiefs of the Minorites themselves, distrusted learning, partly from dread of heresy, partly from jealousy for their own authority. In the first place, Greek was the tongue of the Eastern Empire, which the Roman Church

called heretical, because it did not acknowledge the supremacy of Rome; Hebrew could only be learned from learned Jews; mathematics, medicine and natural science were to be discovered from the Spanish Moors (Saracens, Arabs), who, of course, were Mohammedans; or from Arabic manuscripts, which had preserved something of the knowledge once possessed by the ancient Latin and Greek world. In the second place, the ecclesiastics feared lest knowledge and new discoveries might create a frame of mind unlikely to accept obediently the rules given out from Rome. Believing, as they did, that the authority of the Church was all-important to mankind, and that the authority of the Church was identical with the autocracy of the pope, they naturally discouraged originality. Roger Bacon, whose discoveries, if made known, might have revolutionised the mind and thought of the Middle Ages, was treated by his superiors as a heretic, and for a great part of his life kept in confinement without books or writing materials. Not till 1312 did a pope venture to announce that Greek, Hebrew and Arabic were fit and desirable subjects for University teaching, but the pioneers were then long dead. In the fourteenth century Ockham, lecturing at Paris, succeeded in maintaining the right of human reason to investigate the rules laid down by authority; but even then, for two centuries longer, an open zeal for criticism and scientific discovery might lead to imprisonment and execution.

The suspicion of knowledge and originality inculcated by the churchmen was naturally shared by ordinary people. Mahoun, as they called Mohammed, was to them another name for the devil. Heretics were accused of worshipping the devil, and the common people believed that devils were lurking everywhere, trying to injure them in body and soul. The simplest novelty was to them either a miracle or magic, and magic was probably the work of the devil. This was the reason of their terror-stricken fear of the dark, of owls and bats, of witches and ghosts. The sound of the wind was to them fairy pipes; people really believed that they saw fairies, or demons, or that they had been bewitched, or that the relics of some saint had cured them by a miracle. So Friar Bacon went down to posterity with the character of a magician.

On the other hand, in the realm of beauty the men of the Middle Ages accomplished works which have never since been equalled. Architecture was their principal art, and reached the highest point of beauty. From the mid-twelfth century to the close of the fifteenth the churches, cathedrals, abbeys and castles with which they covered Europe, placed some building of extreme beauty within the daily view of almost every person. In the latter part of the twelfth century the great buildings, whether of the Church or of laymen, had already been planned with less solidity and in finer proportions; arches became wider, columns less thick and taller and patterns more rich. Examples of this style, *Transitional* from Romanesque (or round arched, i. e. *Norman*) to Gothic, are

the Temple Church in London, parts of Canterbury, Oxford and Durham cathedrals, or Oakham Castle hall. Then, at the close of the twelfth century, the first type of pointed or Gothic building, called by us *Early English*, was devised. This was the style of the pointed arch, of ribbed stone vaulting for roofs, and of buttresses to ensure the security of the tall buildings : one of the most beautiful styles of architecture in the world's history. Its earliest example is the choir of Lincoln cathedral, where the Norman building had been ruined in the earthquake of 1185. St. Hugh began the new choir in the *Early English* manner, that is, with narrow or "lancet" windows, slender columns and pointed arches, which gave the stone vaulting of the roofs a soaring, instead of a heavy appearance; while the ornament was produced by the use of a new tool, the chisel, with which hollows and ridges can be cut so as to make relief and effects of light and shade. This made it possible to carve the capitals of columns exquisitely. Leaves were the favourite ornaments, and even figures were introduced. The architect, Geoffrey de Noyers, was probably a Lincolnshire man. Building of a similar style was begun about the same time at Beverley, Winchester, York, Wells, and Glasgow, and soon every founder or rebuilder of a church or cathedral aimed at achieving beauty by the same methods. The most famous—though now there is hardly anything left of the original work—is the church of Westminster Abbey, which Henry III began to rebuild in the middle of his reign, and which furnished a model for builders elsewhere in the land. As the work proceeded, new forms were introduced, especially the French style of making the windows wider and putting patterns in stone across the head of them. This *tracery* could be varied into different forms by the cutters of the stone.

The builders of Westminster Abbey, as of our other cathedrals and churches, were Englishmen, and the name *Early English* truly suggests that the peculiar gracefulness of that style was developed in England. The most complete example of this time still remaining is Salisbury cathedral, built 1220–1258. But similar buildings, larger and more magnificent, began to rise in France; and from Amiens, Paris, and, above all, Rheims, fresh inspiration was drawn by our own builders and brought back again to England. There were schools, or gilds, of masons where the masters taught to the younger men the principles and practices of their art. Every one was a practical builder; the designers, carvers, masons, cutters, etc., were all members of the one great craft, and most of the eminent ones could themselves execute different kinds of work: but the principal group of builders was that of the free-stone-masons (free-masons), who cut with tools the solid stone, as distinguished from marblers, alabaster men, and builders in flint and mortar, etc.

From the names which are still known it seems that there were celebrated schools of builders at Corfe and Barnack, where some of

the best stone was quarried, at Beverley, and at Gloucester; families of master-builders in Kent, and a school of wood-carvers and painters at Colchester. The principal masons, marblers, carpenters, coppersmiths and plumbers, who both planned and worked, were entitled master masons, or carpenters, etc., and they were regularly appointed by the king, or the chapter of a cathedral, as responsible and highly paid officials in charge of the entire work they undertook. When Edward I wished to have a very beautiful tomb made for his wife in Westminster Abbey he sent to the king's mason, who summoned the master carpenter, and with him went to the king to arrange about the monument. When the belfry of the Abbey was begun in 1248, Alexander the Carpenter and William the Plumber were in command of twenty-four carpenters and nine plumbers for five years or more. Every cathedral and great abbey had its regular corps of masons, consisting of the same families for generation after generation.

Edward I finished the Abbey and was also a great builder of castles. He raised to the memory of his wife, Eleanor of Castile, some of the most lovely works of sculpture known—the "Eleanor Crosses"—and all these works were entrusted to the Royal Masons and their companions. The most eminent family of builders in his time were the Crundales of Kent. But to complete any noble building artificers were fetched from all parts—marblers from Corfe, alabaster men from Nottingham, painters even from France or Spain. Both Gloucester and London were famous for brass-founders, and London goldsmiths first cast bronze figures in the thirteenth century.

Naturally the parish churches shared in this movement. Many were rebuilt or enlarged in the beautiful new style, which the masons continued to develop into fresh forms as time went on, so that no two churches of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are quite alike. Inside, the walls were coloured, often by large pictures being painted upon them of religious subjects, such as the Crucifixion and Resurrection, or the Last Judgment. The first use made of rich curtains and cloths woven into patterns—such as that called Arras, from the city which manufactured it—was to make hangings for the churches; and the art of the metal workers, by hand or by founding, was called on for bells, candlesticks, and all kinds of vessels for the altar, belfry or porch. "Pictures are the books of the unlearned," said an old priest, and benefactors to the churches tried to provide them with this sort of teaching.

The parish church was the possession of the whole of the parishioners, the care of it being divided between the rector (*i. e.* whoever drew the principal tithes) who was responsible for the chancel, and the parishioners, to whom the nave belonged. It was always open, and people were continually visiting it, not always for devotional purposes. It was the place in which royal orders would be announced, as the notices still put up on the doors

and porches testify, and where children were taught. It was often a meeting-place for people who wished to talk over business. People in fear or in danger of arrest took refuge there, sure that they were not likely to be actually hurt in the sacred place. On the feast days of saints, especially of the saint to whom the church was dedicated, not only divine service but merry-making was sure to take place, since the Church forbade work upon holy days. Sports and dances, even fairs, usually went on in the churchyard, but often invaded the church itself. And the Church herself led the way in developing what became a new national and popular art—Drama. In this century feast days of saints and fresh, elaborate services were increased by the Roman authorities. To explain to the people the sacred stories of the Scriptures the clergy began to act them, choristers and other people helping. The gilds of townspeople offered to provide such dramas regularly, and the feast of *Corpus Christi* (Thursday after Trinity Sunday) became the favourite occasion for their displays, because most old gilds had dedicated themselves to the Holy Trinity (one survives still in the famous Brethren of Trinity House, which controls our Light-houses). These plays became extremely popular in England. Different types were called Miracle Plays, Mysteries, and Pageants, and out of them, in the sixteenth century, our native drama developed.

It is typical of the thirteenth century that one of its most famous discoveries was a flower—the rose. Hitherto people had not grown plants for pleasure, only herbs and a very few poor vegetables had been raised in the herb-yards. But at the French fairs at Provins people found rose-trees, called with us "Provence roses," either from the little town whence they were brought, or because the queen of Henry III and her sister, princesses of Provence, were fond of them and made them known in England. This was the beginning of pleasure-gardens, and in the lovely carving of the churches and cathedrals flowers and leaves are often to be found. There is much rose-pattern in Westminster Abbey.

At the same time a great improvement took place in gardening. Peas and other vegetables formed a valuable food supply. "The earls, barons, bishops, and citizens of London," we read, laid out large gardens in the suburbs and employed professional gardeners. Quantities of produce from these gardens were regularly sold near the gate of St. Paul's Churchyard. The garden of the earl of Lincoln (afterwards that of the bishop of Ely) in Holborn was especially notable. Many named kinds of pears were grown, and several kinds of apples, especially the large costard (whence *costermonger*). The earl's gardener sold also roses, and hemp, onions, garlic, beans, and much verjuice. Probably the vines so often mentioned were grown, less for the sake of wine than for vinegar, which was the one common chemical of the age, and used in many processes of manufacture or research: to split stone or to work

metal, men began by heating the substance and then pouring vinegar over the place.

Other towns than London had gardens lying outside the walls; and when the Scots ravaged up to the fortifications of Carlisle they were blamed because they ruined the gardens and barked the apple-trees—"a base vengeance."

Fancy View of Constantinople, with Figures dancing to the Tabor and the Pipe

XXV

ENGLAND IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

(ii) Town and Country (1189–1314)

The prosperity and progress which really distinguished England in this period are a little obscured by the frequent political disagreements between the Crown and the Barons. But in both political and social life, the principal change which took place was a large increase in that rank of people generally known as the *Middle Class*, and a decrease in the serf class. Before the reign of Edward I was over merchants were purchasing feudal castles and lands (as at Stokesay), and the king was obliging them to take a part in the work and cost of government, and in the defence of the kingdom. This he achieved (1) by commanding all landowners, who possessed land worth £20 a year to become knights (1256, 1278), so that they should be liable to military service, or its equivalent in taxation, and liable to take their share in the task of local government as justices or special jurors: (2) by making the merchants, who were not fit for those services, pay customs duties on the wool, skins and metals they exported, and help in collecting them: (3) by summoning both the counties and the towns to send representatives to parliament. Burdensome and unpopular as this new duty was, both knights and merchants understood that it was better to have a voice in the raising of taxes than to leave the king's officers and the baronage to settle everything.

Local government was from the time of Hubert Walter to an ever-increasing extent carried on by the knights and freeholders, and the official equality of their ranks rapidly became real. A daughter of Edward I, widow of the earl of Gloucester, married a

simple knight, and angry as the king was, he did not attempt to undo the marriage. A merchant of Hull became an eminent minister of Edward III and founded a powerful family. Judges and abbots, bishops and archbishops came from the country agricultural families. But such mixture and equality of classes was peculiar to England; on the continent, outside Italy, it was impossible.

During this time people began to use surnames which descended from father to son. Earlier, surnames had been nicknames (le brun, white, with-the-nose); or names of occupations, as miller, spicer, lorimer, hayward; but even before the thirteenth century, these became hereditary, and many French names became Englished, *e.g.*, Tibetôt, Blundeville, and De Gaste turned into Tiptoft, Blundell and West. The largest number of surnames, however, came from places, which implies that the first persons so named came from villages of those names, and almost certainly were of English race and not of noble descent.

A great increase of population occurred between 1154 and 1315. Nearly every place name now to be found on our county maps is to be found in Doomsday. But at that time many a name is that of a small manor containing perhaps only the lord's house and a dozen of peasants' huts. By the thirteenth century not only were villages larger, but one had often multiplied into two or three. In such a case the Saxons had not troubled to distinguish them from each other; "Shepton and the other Shepton" was all they would say. But the king's officials and the lords and clergy who owned many manors had to be more accurate, and added a second name, which was sometimes that of the lord, as, Melton Mowbray and Melton Constable; Shepton Mallet and Shepton Beauchamp; Melcombe Regis, Prince's Risborough, Abbot's Bromley, etc. Often the distinctive name is that of the Saint to whom the church is dedicated, especially in the eastern counties, where the ancient abbeys possessed many villages, and prided themselves on the noble churches they erected. Everywhere roads and bridges were being repaired; Edward I ordered that trees and brushwood should be cleared from the sides of the main road for sixty yards that robbers might have less shelter. The rule shows how much overgrown the main roads had become, but the local authorities seldom carried out the order, and bridges frequently fell from lack of repair. They had been made of timber, but from the thirteenth century stone was used. The fens were being better drained round the Wash and the Humber and in Somerset, and the constant travel of all kinds of people caused local roads to be improved. Monasteries were the universal houses of rest, and those on main routes, such as St. Albans, spent vast sums of money, corn and ale in hospitality, and erected special buildings for their guests, rich or poor. These were the earliest inns; an old inn showing a Lamb and Flag, or an Angel, as its sign was probably an abbot's or a bishop's inn, sometimes for pilgrims, sometimes to relieve the abbot or bishop from the secular business of attending

to travellers, while *The Chequers* was probably the house where his tenants brought their rents to his exchequer.

We may perhaps date from the thirteenth century, at latest, the distinctive types of English villages, for there was little or no change in the centres of population between 1200 and 1500. (1) A distinctive type is the defensible village, to be found from Yorkshire to Sussex and from Essex to Gloucestershire. The houses with their outbuildings form an almost continuous oval, narrowing at the ends, where an entrance and exit are left. A wide space is thus enclosed, which in the fourteenth century or later has often in little towns been blocked by a market-hall, or by houses, but in villages has remained the "village green." Its purpose was to serve as a market-place and to hold the cattle at nights, or whenever raids might be feared, for the road at the two narrow ends could easily be blocked and perhaps defended by archers. Behind the houses stretch gardens, which were enclosed by a continuous hedge as an outer defence. The church in such a village or little town usually stands apart from the circle of houses, suggesting that it was built after the original settlement was complete. Such villages are often perched at the edge of a descent, or on a small plateau, which gave the inhabitants an extra advantage. (2) A type probably still older is the clustered village, its houses tightly grouped together, probably round the church, which occupies the highest spot of ground, and whose stone tower served as the place of refuge from raiders or, in marsh lands, from floods. The Scots had a bad record for violating churches, but other robbers seldom challenged their sanctity *plus* stone walls.

(3) The latest type is the straggling roadside village, commoner in the peaceable south than in the north or the west, which subsisted partly by supplying the needs of travellers. Perhaps these villages began about the thirteenth century. There are many of them on the roads from London to the ports, and on those which approach the principal harbours of the east and south coasts.

Windmills came into use during the thirteenth century, being introduced, probably from Flanders, towards the end of the twelfth century. New water-mills, by reason of their weirs, interfered with older mills and fisheries, and in Magna Carta it was forbidden to make fresh weirs, though people frequently did so, in spite of heavy fines.

Though the population was growing so fast, England could still export food, which shows that better methods of agriculture were being used. Already the lords were sometimes enclosing their portions of land by hedges of whitethorn or willow, and so would freeholders do. Then manure would be used. This enclosing proved so profitable that the lords wanted to extend it to open common-land, and the question was raised in parliament (Merton, 1237), when the lawyers, unhappily, declared that the waste land belonged to the lords and they had a right to enclose, so long as they left enough for

the commons. No doubt they believed this to be correct, but it was a new law and contrary to the English custom.

People now drank ale more plentifully, instead of the old-fashioned mead, so that much more barley was grown, and the villages often had three great open fields of corn, instead of two, so that only one-third instead of half the land lay fallow. Early in the century apples and pears began to be grafted, which greatly improved the fruit, and cider began to be made of a much better quality and took its place as a national drink. Plum trees of different kinds were introduced; pear, plum and cherry orchards were planted, and vines and nuts cultivated. In addition to geese and hens, and to the swans kept by the well-to-do, ducks were introduced in the thirteenth century, and quickly became popular.

In those days every monastery and many a manor-house had its fish-pond, or stew, where fresh-water fish were bred; for salt fish, the stockfish so common in towns, was less plentiful in the country, though the salting-down of the flesh of animals which had to be killed before the winter made the salt trade a feature of country life. There are salt ways and salt fords in every county, telling where, from time immemorial, the pack-horses came with their panniers of salt, either from the Wich-es of Cheshire and Worcestershire, or, from the thirteenth century, with imported Gascon or Breton salt, which was better. The lack of winter fodder made slaughtering and salting necessary, but so much salted meat was hardly wholesome, and people used a great deal of spice to give their briny food a flavour. The main supply for London came from Droitwich to Lechlade and thence by boat down Thames.

There must have been a good deal of money to be gained in the town markets by a steady cultivator, for the towns could no longer grow sufficient food in their cornfields, in which, moreover, those who possessed strips were now a minority of the inhabitants, and this doubtless accounts for the ease with which the villeins found the pence which they constantly paid to their lord to purchase all manner of privileges. By the time of Edward I the villein could ordinarily buy permission to send his boy to school, or to marry his daughter, or to leave the manor and remove to another village or town; half a mark (6*s.* 8*d.*) was a usual fee. Often the peasants would pay small sums instead of doing the actual work due from them; and, once paid, the pence were regularly accepted instead of services: they seem always to have had the money. The villein was "free towards every one except his own lord"; and by the beginning of the next century, on most of the private estates in many districts it was rather the inconveniences of villeinage which annoyed the prosperous peasant than any very real hardship, custom having long since rendered the worst incidents obsolete, if, indeed, they ever were practised in England at all.

But the great ecclesiastical estates formed an exception, certainly a very large exception, to this custom of accepting money in

commutation of labour. The small proprietor could easily hire enough labourers for his demesne at the exact season when he wanted them; there were cotters and others who were casual labourers, and he certainly had permanent servants. But the bishops and the monasteries required large numbers of labourers steadily at work on their enormous estates, and therefore they insisted on keeping to the old system of labour-services. This was one cause of their increasing unpopularity as landlords during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

All the same, the lord, whether abbot or knight or royal bailiff, for the most part provided almost as much in food and pay for the men and women who tilled the soil as balanced the services they rendered to their lords, and old records show that feasts at harvest and at other regular times, fixed by the Custom of the Manor, were constantly observed, and provided at all events some merriment and much drinking for the tenants.

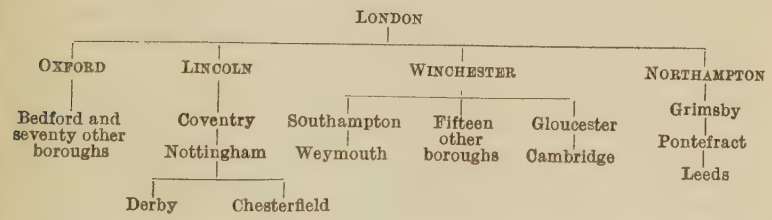
Oddly enough, King John's first public appearance in England had been in the guise of a patron of liberty. Richard had given him the Honour of Lancaster, and one of his first acts was to create a town under the walls of his castle of Lancaster by freeing the villagers from their duties of cultivating the lord's demesne and having their corn ground at his mill. He gave Preston its charter and, in 1207, deliberately created Liverpool to be a port for his traffic with Ireland—which he then intended to subdue. But his greatest benefaction was the far-reaching concession he made to the capital. During Richard's absence on the Crusade John planned to get possession of the crown, and the mistakes of Richard's chancellor, William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, gave him an opportunity. Longchamp was a French priest, grandson of a villein, and his pride and harshness irritated both nobles and commons. He suspected John's intentions and endeavoured to guard against them, but managed so badly that John accused the chancellor himself of being a traitor, and procured the support of the citizens of London, many of whom, it should be remembered, were trained soldiers as well as wealthy men, by granting them "a Commune."

Commune was the name given in France to self-governing towns, such as Rouen, and implied the right of the citizens to elect their own rulers, taxgatherers and judges, instead of the Crown making the appointments or sending its own officers into the city. Henceforth the ruler of London was called, as in France, the *Mayor*, and he was assisted by a council of twenty-four, also elected, who probably exercised the duties and authority of constables and inspectors. This was the beginning of that most famous office of Lord Mayor of London, whose importance was so great that during the rest of the Middle Ages he ranked among the earls, while the aldermen were counted as barons, and who can still exercise, in a crisis, exceptional powers of command or negotiation.

The city was now practically independent of the king. The fines paid in the law-courts went into the city coffers, and if a tax was to be taken the king could only bargain with the mayor over the sum he wanted, and leave the Londoners to collect it as they chose, instead of getting as much out of the inhabitants as his officers could extort. "The Londoners shall have no other king but their mayor," as a citizen boldly expressed it.

Henceforward it was the ambition of every rising town to have a mayor, a concession won before the middle of the thirteenth century by Northampton, York, Bristol, Chester, Oxford, Leicester and Lynn; and though that dignified office was not obtained by all towns, yet during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a great number of charters were granted by the Crown or by private lords, and many towns, large or small, became boroughs, and had the right to elect their own principal official, whether called bailiff or mayor. The mayor was helped by a council of twelve or twenty-four, elected by the burgesses, or even by two councils, a small, superior one and a larger, more popular and less influential one; different places tried different plans but the result was much the same, viz. that, in the course of time, as population grew, the elections became restricted to the richer classes, or to descendants of old families (by 1400), and so a popular government became oligarchical.

When a town got its charter it usually sent to some older borough to learn what rules and methods of self-government were observed there, and thus the *Customs* of one borough became the model of many others, the details being easily varied to suit special circumstances. London, Oxford, and Bristol were models very widely copied. The following table shows how some of the customs were derived—



London even imitated the great continental cities to the extent of asking the masons' company, or gild, to find contractors who would pave the streets, and of using tiles instead of thatch for house-roofs in order to make fires less frequent; and in 1302 tile roofs were made compulsory.

A remarkable feature of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was the increase in gilds. There seem to have been at least thirty in London by the time of the Black Death of 1348. The oldest

were those which were concerned with food, clothing, leather-work, and warfare : *e.g.* the

Bakers	Weavers	Saddlers	Blacksmiths
Butchers	Girdlers	Cordwainers	Armourers
Fishmongers	Mercers	(or Shoemakers)	Spurriers
Pepperers	Drapers	Skinners	Ironmongers
(or Grocers)	Taylors	Glovers	Cutlers
Vintners			Bladesmiths
Poulterers			Sheathers
			Bowyers
			Fletchers
			(arrow-makers)

But the goldsmiths were the most wealthy, and often acted as bankers by lending money on a deposit of jewels.

No other town had nearly so many gilds, but several were beginning to specialise in one manufacture, as, in cloth, Coventry, Bristol, and several smaller towns of the west, from Gloucester to Barnstaple; Leicester, in wool, cloth, mail and weapons; Northampton, in shoes and other leather work; Gainsborough, in gypsum (or plaster) for making floors in stone buildings; Gloucester, in iron goods, especially nails; Nottingham, in gloves and other small wares; Lincoln, in cloth and bows, etc.

The greatest trade in the land was the wool trade. The weaving towns of Flanders and Italy all wanted wool, for of wool or skins nearly all drapery and harness were made. As England had the largest supply of raw materials, including tin for bronze, there was a constant export from her many harbours. Great ships of Genoa or Venice came into the deep haven of Southampton. Fleming and even German merchants journeyed inland to the great fairs of Winchester or Stourbridge (by Cambridge). Most English wool went to Bruges, which was the recognised mart for the wool which the great Flemish cities, from Ghent to Cambrai and Lille, were famous for weaving. When Edward I began to tax regularly the commodities which produced incomes for the exporters, *viz.* wool, hides and tin, it was necessary to do so at our ports. Bruges then became the authorised foreign mart, called the *Staple*, and the ports sending wool cargoes to it were called staple ports. The exporters formed a kind of union, called the Company of the Staple, and in 1313 they had a charter.

The good position of the southern and eastern ports for foreign trade, as well as the increasing importance of London in government, caused the king and his great men to reside, as a rule, principally in the south, where there was much more going and coming, and the north began to be left more to itself, that is, to its local lords. The archbishop of York and the bishop of Durham, if they were often of less weight in the councils of the Church than their brethren of Canterbury, Winchester and Lincoln, were petty kings in their own region, where the Crown, after 1215, usually handed over

to them the cares and privileges of government. John had found the northern barons the most resolute in opposing him. The interests of the north, *i.e.*, beyond Trent, were much linked with Scotland, and during the Scottish war of Edward I York was practically the capital for many years, where the courts abode and councils met. Certain lines of roads which already (perhaps from Canute's time) led from town to town became now (at latest) great through routes to York—the main road from London going by Northampton, that from Southampton through Coventry: Coventry with Warwick and Kenilworth forming an important nucleus of population and manufacture.

On the other hand, country ways were mere tracks. The burgesses of Leicester had guides, licensed and sworn like pilots, to conduct them to the sheep-farms of their own county, and Edward I had to send a corps of woodcutters before his troops in Cheshire, Salop and Flint.

The division between north and south was the Trent Valley, of which Nottingham was the principal key, and to the men of Nottingham, rather than to any nobleman or prelate, the Crown had from the twelfth century entrusted the entire charge and control of the river for its whole course through their county, as well as of the Foss Way and the great road to York by Doncaster. This was little less than a revolutionary proceeding. In Norman times the passages of the Trent had been in the hands of a feudal tenant-in-chief, the lord of the Honour of Tickhill and Blythe. Henry II was glad to abolish so dangerous a power. And in return for the policing of those three thoroughfares, the men of Nottingham were empowered to take tolls at the fords and bridges like any feudal lord, and even to ride and hunt in Sherwood Forest. One of their principal tasks was to watch and register the fugitives from justice who on their way to the favourite sanctuary of St. John of Beverley had to journey by Nottingham.

Men in the north were probably rather rougher and simpler in ways of life than in the south, and the Scottish wars preserved feudalism on its military side. But they had as much education and probably more personal freedom, for villeinage scarcely existed in Yorkshire and Lancashire. The ancient schools of the ancient churches still flourished; York and Beverley and Southwell, Doncaster, Bradford, Derby and Pontefract were still active, and the students who went from these and other or newer schools, such as Chesterfield, to Oxford, and, in fewer numbers, to Cambridge, formed a distinct body there called "the northern nation."

Except for Nottingham and a few smaller towns, the twin shires of Nottingham and Derby, the half-way shires of north and south, were covered with forest and moorland, among which priories and villages were not very numerous, and where outlaws still took refuge. It was from Derbyshire quarries that the famous alabaster of Nottingham came, and the skins for its notable glove-making doubtless were obtained in the forests. This was the age

in which took shape the tales of Robin Hood, whose name was famous in the fourteenth century as the outlaw hero of the forests of Yorkshire and Sherwood.

The great Nottingham Fair, held just outside the city by Lenton Priory, was a resort for merchants from further counties. It was the cheese mart of several shires (as the tales of the Men of Gotham may remind us), and a distributing centre for more than local goods. Beside the armour and gloves of Nottingham would be found Sheffield knives and Lincoln bows, cloth from Leicester and Coventry, boots from Northampton, and spicery from London or Boston.

The favourite Plantagenet place of assembly for councils or armies was Northampton, which, under Henry II, took, and for 250 years retained, the place which Oxford had held in the eleventh century as the junction of the military ways, the meeting-place of north and south. This took the feudal assemblies away from London and Oxford and a considerable distance further north. Perhaps it accounts for the boot and leather manufactures of Northampton, for all armour and military fittings required much leather work. The town was on royal demesne and the castle was carefully garrisoned, but the town obtained great privileges. It had a mayor in 1200 and a very democratic system of self-government, though Henry III forbade it to become a University. So independent was it that it revolted against the tyranny of John's notorious general, Falkes de Bréauté, though he retaliated by burning down most of the town.

Coal had long been known in the north, and was, early in the thirteenth century, in common use in those Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Durham districts where it could be easily got, but its use did not penetrate yet to the south; nor did the iron-works near Sheffield and Rotherham, or those of the tenants of Fountains, Rievaulx and Kirkstall Abbeys, and of the king's tenants in the royal forest of Knaresborough, develop much, though the monks worked them vigorously. They provided for the needs of the locality, but hardly more. Sheffield whittles, or long knives, were eagerly bought at the fairs, but Sheffield remained a mere village for centuries longer. Lead, copper and silver works also existed, but only on a small scale, because only the surface deposits could be reached with the appliances of that day, and smelting was conducted with wood fuel.[1]

[1] See Map 15 at end of book for Plantagenet England.

The bishopric of Durham and Marcher lordships remained special fiefs to the close of the Middle Ages.

The Honour of Lancaster (including large parts of Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire) was annexed to the Crown by the accession of Henry IV.

The County Palatine of Chester became a royal fief with Edward I, but remained exceptional till Henry IV.

The Duchy of Cornwall was the appanage of the king's eldest son from Edward III.

The Mortimer fiefs merged in York (1425).

Mowbray of Norfolk became Howard (1483).

Beauchamp of Warwick became Neville.

De la Pole began only in fifteenth century.

XXVI

THE CROWN AND THE BARONS: (2) EDWARD II (1307–1327)

Edward I	.	Nov. 1272
Edward II	.	July 1307
Edward III	.	Jan. 1327
Richard II	.	June 1377

ENGLISH feudalism may be considered as passing through three stages. The first, when the barons had tried to make themselves really independent, was ended by the strong government of Henry II. The third period covers the fifteenth century. During the second (John to Edward II) the barons, having become more English and less ferocious, aimed at sharing with the sovereign the powers of government. They asserted their right to do so in Magna Carta, and throughout the long reign of Henry III struggled to get real power into their hands. Failing to exercise much influence on the royal ministers, they took up arms, and by the Provisions of Oxford sought to make themselves regents of the country in the king's name by controlling the chief departments—Treasury and Chancery —in which government was actually carried on. Their scheme failed, and Edward I strengthened the royal government, and by organising parliaments which represented other classes of the nation than the barons alone, opposed to the feudal magnates a new kind of force. This shifting of the balance was a method of royal self-defence which Henry III and Edward I used in other ways. When the barons insisted on appointing one of themselves justiciar, justiciars ceased, and the powers of that great office were divided among several Chief Justices, to the benefit of the nation. When they insisted on naming Treasurers or Chancellors, they found that a good deal of secretarial and financial business was brought within the scope of the king's more private departments of the Chamber and the Wardrobe. It was not yet possible for the great departments of government to remain fixed in character, for they were still developing, trying to overtake the vast business of the nation, which grew still faster, and the barons were always behind the times, looking backwards to their happy ideal of independent tyranny and private war. Edward I had baffled and punished the leaders of the barons several times, but they had cost him much loss in France, and when he died, in 1307, they felt that their opportunity had come.

The reign of Edward II exhibits, politically, a repulsive strife between a base and foolish king and a yet baser party of barons, who first endeavour to do without the parliamentary system, and then are ready to destroy the royal family, in order to procure their selfish ends. A middle party in vain tries to preserve better methods, and in the turmoil the barons bring about the loss of Scotland, and its erection, a second time, into a firm kingdom, but this time, a kingdom fiercely the enemy of England. In the meantime the bulk of the nation pursues its way (cf. Chapters XXIV, XXV) without much concern for fighting lords or king, and takes little interest in the political or the personal doings of the sovereign and the court till, between 1330 and 1340, young Edward III rouses again the national sentiment.

Edward II was physically as strong and handsome as any of his race, but his character was known, from childhood, to be utterly frivolous. He was so lazy that they could never teach him even the necessary minimum of Latin, so that at his coronation the royal oath had to be administered to him in French—a public exhibition of royal ignorance.

Edward I had been well aware of his son's incompetence, and had banished from court the young prince's favourite, Piers Gaveston, who had encouraged him in his idle follies. He was the son of a Gascon gentleman, a devoted soldier of Edward I, and Queen Eleanor had brought the orphaned boy to be educated in the royal household with her son Edward, his nephew Gilbert of Gloucester, and a few other noble lads. It was the most generous form royal gratitude could take. Unhappily Piers—brave, vain and witty—was no respecter of feudal conventions, he knew how to win the affection of the frivolous Edward, and, to the disgust of the court, encouraged him in most undignified amusements—mechanical pursuits such as making locks, or singing, acting and dancing—vulgar accomplishments (as they were then considered) such as travelling minstrels and jugglers exhibited to amuse noblemen in their halls on holidays. It was peculiarly unfortunate that the tutor of Edward and his companions, Walter Reynolds, was a time-serving man who had thought only of currying favour with his royal pupil. He succeeded in obtaining the archbishopric of Canterbury, to the scandal of all England: for, as the Canterbury monks had elected a very fit man, learned and upright, Edward II asked the pope to override their choice and make Reynolds primate. It is typical of the methods of the papacy at this time that the pope readily consented, and that king and pope between them in a similar way placed a number of bishoprics in the hands of unworthy men. Of one, a favourite of Edward's, and along with him one of the archbishop's lazy pupils, it was observed that he could not even read the long words at his own consecration as bishop of Durham. "These are not polite words," he ejaculated, "'Soit pour dit!'" ("Take it as said.")

Edward seemed, indeed, to possess an utterly worthless character, which stirred contempt, and between him and his first cousin, Thomas, earl of Lancaster, early grew a deep hatred.

Lancaster was the natural leader of the barons. He was much older than the king, the son of Edward I's brother Edmund, earl of Lancaster, Leicester and Derby, and was heir, through his wife, of the Lacy earldom of Lincoln. Through his mother he belonged to the royal family of France and was uncle to Edward's bride, Isabella, and his possession of the enormous Honour of Lancaster made him at least as rich and powerful as the king.

Going to the Mill.

Henry III had endowed his son Edmund with the vast estates forfeited by Simon de Montfort (earl of Leicester), by Ferrars (earl of Derby), and others of De Montfort's party, especially in Yorkshire, and he also granted him the king's estates in Lancashire and created him earl of Lancaster. Earl Thomas was almost king of the north, and though he was a proud, violent, selfish man, and neither able nor brave, he knew how to conciliate the magnates of the northern church and keep together a party. The earls of Warwick, Pembroke, Hereford, Warenne and Arundel, the Mortimers, great barons of the Welsh March, and the powerful Yorkshire house of Percy, were his supporters. Not only these, but the entire nobility and the prelates, were agreed that Gaveston must be banished. In the first months of his reign, Edward II had heaped every gift and dignity possible upon the upstart, even the royal earldom of Cornwall,

intended for one of the king's little brothers. The treasure stored by Edward I for the Crusade was shared with him; he was married to the earl of Gloucester's sister; he was named regent when Edward crossed the Channel to marry Isabella of France; and as the management of the taxes and finances was largely entrusted to Gascony financiers—his relatives—the merchants and townsfolk believed that they were being pillaged for Gaveston's benefit.

Edward II was powerless to prevent his favourite's banishment, so he despatched him with royal state to Ireland, as the king's deputy, but he was not left there long enough to fulfil the promise made by his good beginning. For several years Edward and the nobles wrangled over Gaveston, Lancaster and most of the great lords even refusing to follow the king to Scotland in his company. At last the nobles decided to take the government entirely out of the king's incompetent hands and rule his dominions themselves (1311). They dismissed his principal officials and named others; they drew up a series of *Ordinances* for the better management of the kingdom, some of which would have been useful if carried out; they had the foreign managers of the customs and taxes dismissed, and ordered that only Englishmen should be entrusted with this most important business, for which the Merchants of the Staple received a charter (1313), and they named twenty-one lords and barons, called the Ordainers, to see that the reforms were carried out. All was to be done by the feudal magnates. What the king hated most was their interference in the royal household, where they compelled him to accept their nominees; and in order to save Gaveston from them he took him to Yorkshire, surrounded by troops, and placed him in Scarborough Castle. Lancaster and the other Ordainers, however, had plenty of troops; Scarborough was besieged and Gaveston surrendered on a guarantee from the earls of Pembroke and Warenne that his life should be spared. But as Pembroke's men were conducting him southwards, the earl of Warwick suddenly carried off Gaveston from their charge, and he and Lancaster had their victim executed on Blacklow Hill, half-way between Warwick and Lancaster's castle of Kenilworth (1312). Pembroke was so angry that he became friendly once more with the king.

During these years of civil strife the barons had refused to pay any attention to Scotland.

For some years the troops and ministers whom Edward I had placed in Scotland had maintained their supremacy. But when no supplies or reinforcements were sent to them, the lords and the people of lowland Scotland began to think it might be safer to support Bruce. The news from England showed that there was little chance of serious invasion, and Bruce and his friend, the famous Black Douglas, captured, one after the other, the fortresses from which Edward I had controlled the country. Berwick itself was only saved from surprise by the barking of a good watchdog.

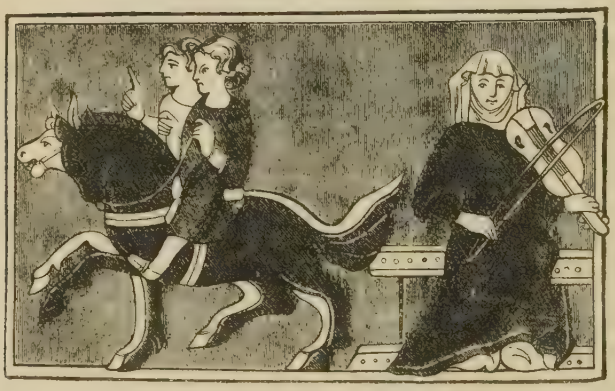
At last, in 1314, Stirling, the key of the whole, was straitly besieged. Bruce, who naturally preferred a surrender to fighting his way in, allowed the governor, according to the custom of that time, to send word to Edward II of his desperate position, and he in return pledged himself to surrender if he were not relieved by a certain date—Midsummer Day. In the interval fighting was suspended and the garrison had food.

On receiving the news, Edward II did his feeble best to collect troops, but Lancaster and the Ordainers objected that he ought to have called parliament first—for which there was no time. Some lords sent troops, but refused to go themselves, most disobeyed the royal summons, and only the earls of Pembroke, Gloucester and Hereford went with the king. Edward had no notion of generalship; he and the great lords took a cumbrous train of luxuries with them, but made no provision for the needs of the troops and their horses. When the tired, hungry army came to Bannockburn within sight of Stirling, only just in time, they found that the Scots had chosen most skilfully the ground on which they meant to fight, and that the larger English host would have to attack them on a narrow front. Gloucester wished to wait a day, to rest the troops, but Edward, with absurd petulance, taunted him with cowardice and insisted on attacking at once. There was no real general, the archers went forward and began to shoot down the Scottish spearmen (as at Falkirk in 1298), but as they were isolated from the rest of the English troops Bruce's cavalry easily dispersed them: thus the English heavy-armed horsemen, who next went forward, came charging on to the unbroken rows of pikes, and many fell into the ditches which Bruce had had dug before his front. In this confusion the English charge was checked, and the fight turned into a hopeless massacre in front and a wild flight in the rear. Gloucester, fighting valiantly, was slain; Pembroke and his men cut their way out; Hereford fled, but only to be taken prisoner. The king was hurried from the field by Sir Giles Argentine and escaped to Dunbar, and thence by sea to Berwick. Sir Giles, having seen him on his way to safety, turned back to the battle saying proudly, "It is not the custom of an Argentine to fly," and there he fell gloriously. A crowd of knights and twenty barons were slain and nearly all the rest taken captive.

The battle of Bannockburn (Midsummer Day 1314) decided far more than the surrender of Stirling. Scotland became once more a separate kingdom, while Edward II, in his disgrace, was helpless in the hands of the barons.

The earl of Lancaster apparently had no aim except to secure his own safety and to paralyse the government. He refused to attend councils or parliaments, but stayed in the north, surrounded by an army with which he put down any opposition. Nevertheless he refused to face the Scots, even when they raided Northumberland, re-took Berwick and ravaged Yorkshire. The north, now wealthy

and for generations unharmed, afforded rich booty, but the Scots spared Lancaster's possessions, and men whispered that he had a traitor's understanding with Bruce. Private wars broke out all over the west of England, from Lancaster's sub-tenants in Lancashire to the earl of Gloucester's at Bristol, where the townsfolk, driven past patience by oppression, threw off authority for two years and could only be reduced to submission by a regular siege by royal troops. The nation was in dire straits, too, from famine and pestilence, which began in the north with the Scottish devastations in 1313, and were increased by bad seasons and murrain among the cattle. The government tried to keep down the price of food by making rules, which, however, were so unpractical that people were discouraged from bringing their produce to market at all. Even



SCENE FROM AN OLD ROMANCE IN WHICH THE HEROINE, DISGUISED AS A JUGGLER, PLAYS A WELSH AIR ON THE FIDDLE TO MAKE HERSELF KNOWN TO THE HERO. (From a Thirteenth-century Miniature.)

Ireland was invaded and ravaged by the Bruces (1315–1318), and the scanty beginnings of settled civilisation there were once more reduced to anarchy.

Lancaster's jealousy would tolerate no active minister, and soon led his party to insist on the banishment of the principal royal officers, whom they had themselves helped to appoint: Hugh Despenser and his son, barons of the southern Welsh March, and therefore rivals of Lancaster's supporters, the Mortimers.

But Lancaster's evil deeds had by this time led several of the more patriotic barons, led by Pembroke, to take the royal part; and in the brief civil war which followed, Edward was able (1322) to defeat the Mortimers, recall the Despensers, attack Lancaster in his Yorkshire lair, pursue him to Boroughbridge, and defeat him. The earl of Hereford was killed in the fight, and Lancaster beheaded at his own castle of Pomfret (Pontefract).

After this a real parliament was held at York, and the principle was laid down that matters which concern the whole realm must be dealt with by a complete parliament. This finally defeated the feudal attempts to confine government to the nobles; the commons could not again be ignored. One token of their recognition as a permanent part of the government was the fixing of the wages which were to be paid to every member by his county or his town: every knight of the shire was to receive four shillings a day and every member from a town two shillings. This shows what the expenses of travelling and lodging in London were expected to amount to in those times, and one reason why short parliaments were popular.

For four years the Despensers controlled the government. They and their friends had, in the York parliament, organised also the departments of the royal household on so practical a method that for centuries their plan was still followed, so that wars or civil troubles did not much interfere with the working of these government offices. But they showed less ability in other matters, and though Edward II became devoted to the younger Despenser, they dared not count on him, but tried to secure overwhelming wealth and power for themselves in their own lands on the Welsh Marches. They were only able to control England by stopping the war with Scotland. After the king had been nearly taken prisoner in Yorkshire by Scottish invaders a truce was made with Bruce (1323) for thirteen years, so that the north of England was spared further devastation, but the work of Edward I was finally given up. This alone was enough to make the Despensers unpopular, and they were in danger from the revenge and jealousy of the Mortimers, who would not tolerate rivals on the Welsh March, and who now aspired to lead the feudal party against Despenser, the king and the growing constitutional party. Queen Isabella, desperately angered by her contemptible husband, joined the Mortimer party, and when she took her young son Edward, now twelve years old, to France to do homage for the French fiefs (1325), she seized the opportunity to obtain troops and money to attack the king. Her brother, the French king, would not help her, but she obtained all she required in Flanders from the count of Hainault in return for a splendid marriage for his daughter, Philippa, with the young prince. Roger Mortimer joined her, and a sudden invasion of the conspirators in 1326 found Edward II helpless. The Despensers fled to their western fiefs, but were caught on the way and hanged, and Edward was imprisoned at Kenilworth, the castle of the new earl of Lancaster, Henry, brother of Earl Thomas.

Parliament was summoned, and Bishop Orleton of Hereford, who owed his career to the Mortimers, asked the members whether they wished to have the father to rule over them or the son. They declared for the son, and so Edward III (now nearly fifteen) became king, by acclamation, as it were, and his father was deposed.

Edward III was crowned at once (January 1327), but as he was so young a Regency was composed of his uncles, the earls of Norfolk and Kent, his cousin Henry, earl of Lancaster, the archbishops, and several other bishops and barons. They attempted to satisfy the most important interests by bestowing a fuller charter on London, which secured most unfair favour in taxation, and by setting up more officers for keeping order: *Keepers of the Peace* they were called, and they became important and busy officials, for Edward III and subsequent kings thrust increasing tasks upon them. The regents further declared the sentence on Earl Thomas to have been unjust, which pleased not only his feudal party but crowds of humbler people, who, especially in the north, had taken him for a martyr, believed that miracles were worked at his grave, and used to go on pilgrimage to "St. Thomas of Lancaster"; so easy was it for political and clerical influence combined to provide a new superstition to suit their own ends.

Real political power was, however, in the hands of Queen Isabella and Mortimer, who made himself earl of March (the March of Wales) and took the Despensers' fiefs. All the Crown resources, too, were wielded by the pair, so that jealousy, fear and disgust at the relations between the queen and the new earl rapidly developed and gradually deprived them of support, especially when the news spread that Edward II had been removed by Mortimer from the custody of Henry of Lancaster and had been cruelly murdered in Berkeley Castle.

Mortimer, so skilful and bold in his own interests, proved as incompetent before the Scottish enemy as Thomas of Lancaster and the Despensers. He allowed the young king to be disgracefully defeated and very nearly taken prisoner in his first expedition against them, and then signed a treaty at Northampton giving up all the royal claims on Scotland. The treaty was commonly called the Shameful Peace (1328), and deepened Mortimer's unpopularity. It would have been difficult for his enemies to get rid of him without a civil war but for his cruel treachery to the king's uncle, the earl of Kent. Mortimer tricked Earl Edmund into believing that Edward II was still alive, seized the messages which the earl naturally tried to send to his brother, accused him of "treason" to his nephew the king, and beheaded him.

This judicial murder stung Edward III (now seventeen) into taking the bold step of attacking the tyrant himself, The queen and the earl of March, aware of their unpopularity, ruled from the stronghold of Nottingham Castle, where at night Isabella kept the keys under her pillow, but the custodian was readier to do his duty by the young king than by the usurping queen. There were secret passages in the hollowed hill below the castle, only known to him, and by these he admitted Edward and a body of trusty soldiers into the interior of the castle, where Mortimer was seized and executed, as he had executed others, without a trial. Isabella was sent into dignified private retreat.

XXVII

THE BEGINNING OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR
EDWARD III (1327–77)

(i) England

THE downfall of Mortimer (1330) closed the feudal struggle for the time. The nobles had not succeeded either in permanently depressing the Crown or in setting aside the Commons. But several years passed before regular order was even outwardly established in the government and in the country at large.

The young king was impetuous and arbitrary and by no means always just, and the civil strife of the late reign had given the worst possible training to the new generation of officials.

Nevertheless Edward III was popular on the whole for the larger part of his reign. He was well fitted to be a leader of the nation, for he was brave and vigorous and prominent in warlike and chivalrous pursuits; he decided rapidly and was often generous. He lived much in London and was the first king who was really popular there and could reckon on the good feeling of the citizens to protect the royal family from harm or insult. The Londoners had despised Edward II; they had been out of favour with Edward I, and often in open revolt against Henry III; but Edward III had none of the haughty disdain for the life and business of townsfolk which was earlier common among royal and noble ranks. The bargain the city had made with him, or rather with his council of regents, in 1327, shows how little feeling of common interest and patriotism existed as yet. London, by far the wealthiest place in the kingdom, procured the favour of being rated for subsidies, not as a city, at one-tenth, but as a shire, at one-fifteenth, and got for her rich merchants the exemptions allowed to fighting knights and squires: armour, horses, plate, jewels and a liberal allowance of rich clothes were actually not taxed at all. Similar instances of local selfishness were exhibited by other cities when they had the chance of bargaining with the Crown. Gloucester got permission to secure the money for its street improvements by taking toll of boats from other towns. Nottingham, less sordid, only required better hunting grants; while Leicester, at the end of the reign, obtained exemption from a loan for national purposes by invoking the powerful influence of Katherine Swynford, who was afterwards presented with a token

of gratitude in the shape of a magnificent saucepan worth £2 (nearly £50 at present values).

It is the distinguishing mark of England among the kingdoms of Europe that, during this fourteenth century, when in other countries the parliamentary institutions begun in the previous century were being discouraged and the liberties of the people being curtailed by aristocracies, she turned away from continental lines of development to take a path of progress all her own. In England, thenceforward, the ancient unwritten rule of a partnership between Crown and People was well understood, and kings too proud or too foolish to adapt themselves to it rushed upon destruction. Similarly, the Nobility, including the prelates of the Church, had to learn that its very existence would depend on the honesty and success with which it should lead the entire nation, and not upon maintaining itself as a separate and selfish class.

An instance of the difference between England and France may be seen in the effects produced by the royal law-courts. In both countries the courts aimed at securing fair dealing between man and man and at repressing the independence of feudal lords. But in France the supremacy of the king in law was often used to level also local and popular liberties, while in England the people themselves helped in the juries to work the legal machine. In France the *parlement* sank into a body of lawyers dependent on the king; in England new law could be made in and by parliament, which was greater than the courts and acted as a watch and check upon the king's ministers and even upon himself.

The barriers between different classes erected by the Conquest had been considerably lowered and breached during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the long reign of Edward III saw a wider equality, and in consequence a better sense of unity among the people, who now, in all ranks and classes, were fond of asserting their Englishness as against foreigners, chiefly Scots, Germans, Flemings and Frenchmen. Certainly Edward's wars strengthened this feeling, for the victories over which the nation became jubilant —Crécy, Sluys, Poitiers, Halidon Hill and Neville's Cross, names which became words of magic for centuries—were won not so much by the courage of the nobles, as by the skill and discipline of archers and infantry, troops furnished by the mass of the people. The general sentiment was far different from that prevalent under Edward I.

The course of the war was lengthy; single years of great activity were separated by long periods of preparation or uncertainty. The king and the parliament were not always agreed, but the latter, in return for the heavy taxes it voted, secured much power. Foreign financiers were dismissed and Englishmen appointed to take charge of the nation's business. Latin and French now ceased to be the only written languages, and English became the real tongue of the whole nation: the favourite court poet, Chaucer, composed

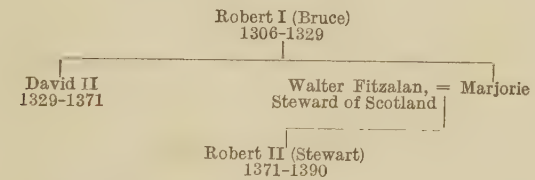
in English; the great scholar of Oxford, Wyclif, preached in English; in the grammar schools boys no longer construed their Latin into French, but into English, lawsuits were ordered to be pleaded in English, and in parliament the Royal Speech was, in 1362, delivered by the chief justice in English.

The ambition of the youthful Edward III was to take up the policy of his grandfather: first, to assert his own overlordship in Scotland, then to reconquer the lost parts of Gascony and perhaps other lost dominions of English kings in France.

France was at this time the strongest kingdom in Europe, much larger than England, very much richer, and five or six times as populous. It seemed a forlorn hope to challenge her powerful king and famous chivalry. Edward hoped to overcome the difficulty by forming a league with England's natural allies, the Flemings, as well as with the emperor and other rulers whose territories lay between Flanders and the Rhine, and who were suspicious of the growing strength of France. Edward I had tried the same plan and failed: his grandson was destined to experience exactly the same failure. It was easy to conceive plans and alliances, it was impossible to get the different allies to keep their promises, or, even when they did, to make them keep time. But it took Edward many years (from 1338 to 1346) to find this out.

When king and parliament finally resolved to rely on the national strength, one result was a more effective system of taxation. A permanent wool-tax, called the *Subsidy* (based on that of Edward I, 1303) and another on wine (*Tunnage*) with a *Poundage* of 3*d.* to 6*d.* on each £ value of other imports was voted, usually for a term of years.

(ii) SCOTLAND



The "Shameful Peace" of Northampton (1328) had recognised the independence of Scotland. A few months later her great king Robert Bruce died, an old man of fifty-five, leaving as his heir David II, a boy of seven. Immediately after, the famous Douglas fell in crusade against the Moors in Spain.

The vigorous young English king, therefore, found only a dispirited country under a regent (four regents in four years), but he did not immediately attack her himself. He decided to place on the Scottish throne a vassal king, Edward, son of John Balliol, and sent him to invade Scotland as if on his own account. Edward Balliol was at first successful, and in 1332 routed the

Scots at Dupplin Moor, took Perth, still the principal fortress, and was crowned at Scone.

But no sooner did he avow his vassalage to the king of England, than he was driven out of the country by Sir Andrew Moray and Archibald Douglas, the brother of the famous Sir James the Black. Edward III, however, did not desert his vassal, but seized the opportunity to send a regular army to besiege Berwick, and when Douglas attempted to relieve the city he was defeated and slain and his army cut to pieces at the battle of Halidon Hill, 1333. English archers were more than a match for Scottish cavalry.

This battle placed Scotland at the mercy of Edward III. He annexed Berwick permanently to England and also took most of the Lowlands as far as the Forth, while Edward Balliol established himself at Perth: but the Scots sent their little king David to France for safety and refused to acknowledge either Edward III or his puppet king. They maintained their alliance with France, and reaped much benefit from it when the outbreak of open war between Edward III and Philip VI in 1337 diverted English attention to France. By a series of brilliant exploits, like those of the days of Bruce, the Douglases, Morays and other resolute chiefs, sometimes with French help, captured castle after castle, till King David's kinsman, Robert the Steward—the sixth regent in eight years—finally got possession of Perth, Stirling and Edinburgh, and felt it safe to bring the young king back (1341).

David II owed a debt of gratitude to France and tried to pay it when, in 1346, the English were undertaking the invasion which resulted in the brilliant successes of Crécy and Calais. To create a diversion, David led a powerful army into England and had reached Durham before the northern lords were able to face him. But while Durham still defied the Scots, the archbishop of York with the Percies and the Nevilles brought up a picked force, with Yorkshire archers, and not only won a complete victory, but took prisoner David himself with four earls and a bishop, at the battle of Neville's Cross.

There was little help for France to be found as yet in Scotland. The Steward tried to save the country from anarchy while David remained eleven years a not unhappy prisoner in England, where he received an excellent royal training, and was married to Edward's daughter Joan. But savage border warfare continued on both sides of the frontier. The Lowlands of Scotland and the northern shires of England were alternately ravaged with fire and sword, and hatred between the two countries became a permanent tradition.

Even when Edward III agreed to a treaty for ransoming David the Scots broke the terms at once, seizing an opportunity (1355) to retake Berwick and harry Northumberland. The English king executed a fearful punishment. He himself led a winter campaign as far as the Forth, burning to the ground every village, church

and town, including Edinburgh: "The Burnt Candlemas" the Scots called it (1356). When David II was allowed to return home (1357) he was obliged to promise a ransom so enormous that it took fourteen years to pay the half of it, even by the most crushing taxes. The ravages of the war, the Black Death, the burden of taxation, and the loss of her one great merchant seaport, plunged Scotland into a state of poverty and almost anarchy far inferior to her condition under Alexander III, a century earlier.

Berwick remained English except between 1461 and 1482. She was never again so great and prosperous, but was held rather as a fortress. And the curious manner in which the place was attached to England, forming part of no English county, is shown in Acts of Parliament. Even when England and Scotland became one kingdom, and up to our own day, new laws were proclaimed as applying to "England and Scotland and our town of Berwick-upon-Tweed." Roxburgh, also, was retained as an English fortress till 1460, so that the principal keys of the Cheviots were held by England. But the renewal of the war and the absorption of the king in its conduct on the continent told heavily upon the Northern counties of England.

The sovereign was now seldom seen north of the Trent, even when there was trouble with Scotland. The Plantagenet kings had almost as frequently appeared in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire as in southern counties. The Roman roads which served the Saxons were now out of repair, and the land had grown wilder with the devotion of the pick of her men to war.

The difference between north and south became more marked as time went on. South of the Trent, constant travel and acquaintance with French, the ordinary tongue of the educated, produced much alteration in the ancient English language, whereas Scottish forms were common in the north. Numbers of French words came into use, and the old words came to be pronounced in a softer manner and lost most of their inflections. By 1350 men from north of Trent and south of Thames could hardly understand each other.

The subsequent condition of the Border may here be outlined. As it was above all things necessary for each country to keep watch and guard upon the other, the English government, from 1328, appointed a Border Warden, and the Scottish government did the like for its own territory. These Wardens of the Marches were military lieutenants for the king, acting on their own authority, and were invested not only with the power and duty of keeping armed forces always ready, but with almost arbitrary powers of justice. Generally, there were three commands in the English region; the East March, with its principal centre at Berwick, the Middle March (Alnwick), and the West March (Carlisle). Three Scottish Marches stood over against them; but often one Warden would rule two, or all three, Marches. The Wardens of the English

Marches were usually Percies, sometimes Dacres or Nevilles, these being the principal military families of those regions. In Scotland, the Douglases were the first Wardens; on their disappearance Kerrs, Scotts, Homes or Maxwells took their place.

It followed that a feudal chivalry maintained its strength in these uplands until the beginning of the seventeenth century united the two kingdoms under the single sceptre of James VI and I. But it was a rough and too often a barbarous chivalry. Women were carried off as slaves, abbeys plundered and even destroyed, and churches sometimes burnt. The minor families conducted cattle raids on their own account, and as the English side was the richer, it was usually the Scots of Teviotdale or Liddesdale who first drove off English cattle, and the English who came afterwards for retaliation. Many a ballad still celebrates the cunning and daring of some Elliot or Armstrong, Rede or Hall, the chivalry of a Douglas or the power of a Percy, and the fame, as fortress or refuge, of "merry Carlisle"—the paradise of the English borderer. The noble Scottish ballad of "Otterburne"—Englished as "Chevy Chace"—tells the tale of the most brilliant of all the encounters between a Douglas and a Percy (1388), whose rivalry became the most famous family feud of this island.

Unfortunately, but very naturally, the condition of ceaseless war in which the northern counties remained until Tudor times, led high and low to adopt the blood feud. These rivalries of great families caused dissension and bloodshed hardly less than the international quarrel, and the feud of Percy and Neville became a matter so fierce and extensive as to embroil half the aristocracy of England and help decisively to bring about the fatal Wars of the Roses.

This long warfare of two centuries almost stopped the building of towns, churches or castles in the Scottish Lowlands. Stone walls, said Robert Bruce, were the nests of the English, and he counselled his successors to pull down their possible lairs. Barren fields and shelterless moors were the best protection of Scotland, starvation her chief weapon, even in her most fertile districts, against the invader. It was a policy of suicide, for it meant the abandonment of agriculture for cattle-herding—as had been the case in Wales—and that meant unsettled life and no progress.

In the English borderland, where the farms and villages still claimed protection, a number of castles sprang up. At first Carlisle, Newcastle, Alnwick, Berwick and Roxburgh might seem enough to guard the frontier. But the English counties were not menaced so much by deliberate campaigns as by rapid raids. These were made via the various river valleys which opened natural roads for the Scots on their active ponies; Coquetdale or Redesdale, and the North Tyne, were easily reached from Liddesdale and Teviotdale; or, on the west, the Lune and Irthing from Liddesdale

and Eskdale, whence, avoiding Carlisle, the raiders came by Alston moor and the Roman road over Stainesmoor, avoiding Barnard Castle, into the heart of Yorkshire. The Dacre castle of Naworth, the Umfraville castle of Harbottle, the Percy castle of Warkworth, and smaller forts, like Ford, or Norham, could not stop them. Every freeholder tried to fortify his home, and some of their little square pele-towers can still be seen, with the entrance high above the ground, only to be reached by a ladder.

One curious result of incessant strife was a kind of fellow-feeling among the borderers. Outlaws who fled from the vengeance of their enemies at home could count on an asylum with the free-booters of the opposite country. And in the course of political rebellions a Scottish Douglas or earl of March would find a warm welcome with a Percy, while an English rebel would seek the protection of a Scott or a Home. There was little barrier of language or of habits, so that, in the future, it might not be very difficult for two kindred enemies to settle down in peace. But this was not to be until the accession of James VI and I. To the end of the Middle Ages there was a condition of war, even when peace nominally reigned between the two sovereigns.

XXVIII

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

(iii) Flanders

It is true to say that during the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century—from Athelstan to Elizabeth—the key to the foreign policy of England and her kings may be found in the countries of the Rhine mouths and the adjacent coast, the modern kingdoms of Belgium and Holland, respectively called by Englishmen in early times Flanders and Frisia. That the Angles and Saxons had themselves come from that region was not forgotten during the Saxon epoch, when many missionaries tried to evangelise the still heathen Frisians. Later, as soon as the Norse pirates were mastered (in the eleventh century) the rapid development of civilisation in Flanders placed that country in the van of progress, north of the Alps. Under the liberal sway of the Saxon and Rhenish emperors, the Flemish citizens became great traders, and their shippers and merchants were foremost among those "men of the emperor," who obtained royal protection here and were allowed to settle in London. During the eleventh century the wool trade became, as it remained for ages, the common interest of Flanders and England. The mighty free cities of Bruges, Ypres, Ghent, Lille, Arras, and their companions provided a political model for the ambitious citizens of London. Many of our maritime and mercantile methods and terms were borrowed from them, and after the Norman Conquest a common political danger frequently linked English kings and Flemish cities.

This danger was the king of France. As has already been shown, every French king sought to reduce the power of his over-great vassal the duke of Normandy; at the same time every French king tried to increase his personal dominions by getting the lordship over still smaller states which seemed to invite interference. The weakness of the Empire, which was becoming (from the eleventh century) more entirely German, allowed the counties which form Belgium to slip from its control, as did also Burgundy and Italy, and the French kings profited. Those counties consisted of: (1) Flanders proper, the region along the coast from the mouth of the Somme to that of the Scheldt—St. Quentin to Zeebrugge: its principal cities were Bruges, Ghent, Ypres, Lille. Its count early

recognised the suzerainty of the king of France, which the cities endeavoured to ignore. (2) The county of Hainault, with Mons, Cambrai and Valenciennes. (3) The duchy of Brabant with Brussels and Antwerp. Both these states continued to be in name fiefs of the Empire. (4) The practically independent bishopric of Liége. The western populations were of Flemish race, speaking a language akin to both German and English, and easily understood by Englishmen; the easterly population was (and is) called Walloon, and spoke a French dialect. There was a close connection between the ruling families of Normandy and Flanders: William the Conquerer married a princess of Flanders, to the great annoyance of the French king. When Robert's son William "the Clito" led revolts against his uncle Henry I, the French king created him count of Flanders, and Henry owed a debt of gratitude to the city of Bruges for rejecting young William and bringing him to his death on the field of battle. Henry's second wife was a princess of Louvain. Stephen got the best of his mercenary troops from Flanders and Brabant, for the population there had grown so fast that even their manufactures could not support them all, and for some centuries bands of excellent soldiers, and smaller groups of farming folk, were constantly emigrating. Henry II encouraged them to come here, especially to the somewhat empty lands of Norfolk, the Fens, and Wales, and to their skill in agriculture and drainage England owed a good deal. Several of Henry's best officers came from the Flemish provinces, including the founders of the famous families of Percy and Balliol. A Brabant nobleman, Josceline of Louvain, was rewarded by the hand of the heiress of the Norman Percies with their rich fiefs in Yorkshire, and from him sprang the famous house which dominated the north for so long.

The vigorous development of feudalism in France, at the time (twelfth and thirteenth centuries) when English kings were trying curb it, naturally caused the counts of Flanders to look to France help in maintaining their control over their turbulent subjects; and at the same time led the Flemish cities to look to England for help in their constant resistance to their counts, or to the French kings, when these tried to reduce the cities to order. And English kings (as Edward I and Edward III), who strongly resented the claims to liberty made by London, were ready enough to abet Bruges or Ghent in much larger claims when these meant opposition to the king of France.

The league which John got together against Philip Augustus was zealously joined by the Flemings, and the defeat at Bouvines (1214) which drove John home to face his angry barons left them helpless in the grasp of the French king. He had already destroyed Damme, the first great harbour of Bruges, and though an English fleet immediately destroyed the French fleet in Sluys haven, this did little good to Flanders, which Philip Augustus

deprived of the large district of Artois (including Bapaume, Arras and St. Omer), which became and remains part of France.

Thenceforth the French menace was dreaded in Flanders more and more, and when, in the thirteenth century, rival claimants wrangled over the succession in Flanders and Hainault, the French king supported one side, the English king the other.

Already the Flemings claimed the right to elect their count in times of doubtful succession. Their fortifications were almost impregnable, they ruled themselves by elected officers, had their own troops, voted and collected their own taxes, named their own judges, and practically reduced the count to the position of a constitutional ruler. So long as he did not offend them, the count could enjoy great wealth, and some, Count Guy (1278–98) and Charles the Bold (1467–77), made their courts the most magnificent in Europe.

But in spite of their independence and wealth, the cities had a bad reputation as allies, on account of their extreme fickleness and ferocity. Their fiercest passion seemed to be jealousy, and every few years bloody struggles took place, now between Bruges and Ghent; now between the wealthy employers and the artisans; now between rival gilds, such as the Weavers and the Fullers, who, though neither could subsist without the other, were always flying at each others' throats. There was no thought of what would now be called democratic equality, any more than elsewhere in the Middle Ages. The great merchants, in their rich gilds, kept the government in their own control, while the artisans, wealthy and comfortable beyond any other townsfolk in Europe, often sought to take at least the city government into their hands. Both classes despised the agricultural peasantry and kept them in a state of semi-serfdom.

The weakness in the position of the Flemish cities was that they existed entirely by commerce, and were dependent on both French and English merchants; from the former they imported large quantities of corn and wine, from the latter the wool which supplied their looms. Nor could they always pursue their own line of policy, even if they were sagacious and determined enough to choose a wise one, for they had, in the course of several centuries, helped to cement a commercial league which, even before the fourteenth century, had become a naval and commercial power—the *Hansa of London.*

The word *Hansa* was a term which in the Middle Ages signified a league of merchant towns for commercial purposes, and the distinctive name was given by the city which was the centre of the commerce. How early they existed is not known, for kings and chroniclers did not take public notice of them until they were already flourishing and powerful. The principal leagues which English commerce either allied or struggled with were: (1) the Hansa of Cologne; (2) the Hansa of Paris; (3) the Hansa of

London, and, rather later, (4) the Baltic Hansa, or Hansa of Lübeck. This last, flourishing in the fifteenth century and later, is often called *the* Hanseatic League, because, as it was the latest and largest, it is the best known.

(1) The Hansa of Cologne probably included all the lower Rhine towns as far as the sea. It had a London settlement, from Ethelred's days, which had a monopoly of English foreign trade; its members were merchants in London but became known further north as pirates—a double character much like that of the original Vikings.

(2) The Hansa of Paris certainly existed before 1100, and developed the great French fairs in Champagne which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries formed a focus of commerce between the Rhine and the Straits of Dover. It did not require any special facilities in London, because, after 1066, Norman merchants were at home in London, and traffic was natural and easy between the Thames and the Seine.

(3) The Hansa of London was not a league of English towns but of towns outside England which traded with London. Little is now known of its rules and methods, or of the position of London itself in the league, probably because every one took that for granted. London was the centre and probably the head of the league; and Cologne and Bremen were included in it, but the greatest number of towns were Flemish (seventeen), and the purpose was to combine to exploit, first, the fairs of Champagne, then the commerce of England.

(4) The Baltic towns were first admitted to trade with England by John, who gave to Bremen, Lübeck and Hamburg, the ports of his nephew Otto of Saxony (Emperor Otto IV), the same privileges as Cologne had enjoyed for two centuries. Cologne was indignant, and petitioned Henry III to exclude the upstart Baltic towns, but the king ordered (1260) that merchants of all German towns should share the same privileges and settlement: their hall was termed the Aula Teutonicorum, but it got the local name of "Steelyard."

In all likelihood the Flemish Hansa "of London" was more important and widespread in the thirteenth century than the purely German league, but the latter was well known in Winchester and Northampton, and certainly exported from both southern and eastern ports.

But the cosmopolitan traffic of the Hansa of London, being ocean-borne, prevented the less maritime Flemish cities, though they were in the majority, from acting in their own interests alone, and enabled the German towns, which were stronger in marine, to get their full share, or rather more. The Flemings were the readier to entertain political schemes, and in order to resist French overlordship and the feudal tyranny which would come with it, they had invited Edward I into their country. But the delays forced upon Edward by his own nobles, who were

certainly playing the game of the French king and of feudalism, as they probably knew, made him too late to help the Flemings, who had already signed a truce when he arrived, so that in a few years Philip IV marched through Flanders as a conqueror. The insolence of the French nobles was, however, their undoing without any English interference. Bruges suddenly broke into a fierce rising (called "the Matins of Bruges"), massacred the French garrison and put into the field such an army as, to the amazement and horror of European chivalry, but to the satisfaction of Edward I, utterly destroyed the feudal army of France at the battle of Courtrai (1302).

It is a proof of the good understanding among the English people of the principles involved in the Flemish struggle for freedom that one of the oldest-known English songs is about this victory at Courtrai; it also shows that the Flemings were recognised as our allies against the French king, who was already accepted as a national enemy. It begins—

"Listen, lordings, both young and old,
Of the Frenchmen that were so proud and bold,
How the Flemish-men bought them and sold,
upon a Wednesday.
Better them were at home in their land,
Than for to seek Flemings by the sea strand,
Where-through many [a] French wife wringeth her hand,
and singeth—Well away!

"The King of France made statutes new
In the land of Flanders, whether false or true,
That the commons of Bruges full sore 'gan rue
and said amongst them,—
"Gather we us together hardily at e'en
Take we the bailiffs by twenty and by ten
Clap we off their heads an ofen [above] on the green
and cast we in the fen!"

This battle has been compared to Bannockburn, but its effect was less permanent, for the Flemish burghers could not maintain their resolution, far less their military discipline, and in two years' time Philip IV routed them utterly and annexed permanently to France another slice of Flanders, including Lille and several other cities.

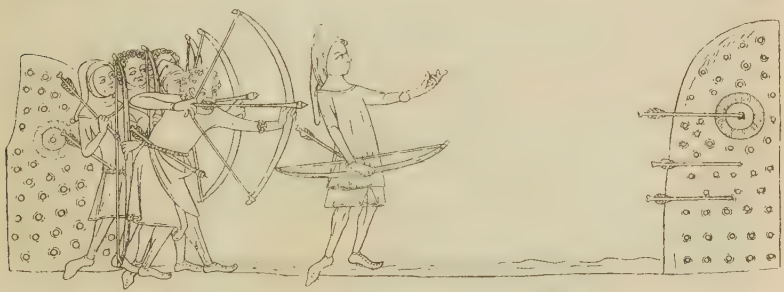
When Isabella (daughter of Philip IV and sister of the three kings who in turn ruled France from 1314 to 1328) became queen of England, English policy changed for a generation, as Edward II, and after him Mortimer, readily fell in with the French king's views; and when the French sovereign forbade the export of corn to Flanders the English government forbade the export of wool, so that the Flemings were half starved and out of work, and being completely beaten in battle in 1328 (at Cassel), were again helpless before their French count and his protector King Philip VI, who in 1328 succeeded to the crown of his cousin Charles IV.

But when Philip's alliance with the Scots showed that war with England was intended, it became of the first necessity to Edward III to secure ports as near as possible to his own coast, so as to be able to land an army. Bordeaux and Bayonne were not only far off, but might prove to be in French hands by the time he reached them, and were, besides, too far from Paris, at which any invading army must strike. There remained the ports of Flanders at the mouth of the Scheldt—Cadsand (on an inlet called the Zwyn) and Sluys—both long since silted up.

The Flemings, on their side, were extremely anxious for a reliable understanding with England. There was a burgher of Ghent, named James van Artevelde, of such eminence that his fellow-citizens resorted to him to solve their difficulties. Van Artevelde believed that the cities could make friends with England without having to fight France themselves, and himself went to London to make a treaty. The English king promised anything to secure the ports, and granted to Ghent and her allies (the other Belgian cities and Cologne) the right of free entry into English harbours, so that the English merchants (who had to pay customs and tolls) were dismayed to find that the foreigners had actually better facilities for trade in this country than themselves.

The truth was that Edward III, like his grandfather, was often compelled by his need of large money loans to treat the foreign commerce of England as a branch of his foreign politics, and not by any means according to the wishes of English traders themselves.

But the sacrifices made for the sake of the Flemish alliance had little result, for James van Artevelde fell in 1345, and his son Philip, who later tried to pursue his father's policy, was slain in the French victory at Roosbeke in 1382. After their time the Flemish cities were less prosperous, the German branch of the Hansa League became more and more powerful and conducted a trade war of its own, and Flanders remained under French control until the middle of the fifteenth century. In consequence the Flemings, who had helped Edward I and Edward III, did not help Henry IV and Henry V, though they afterwards came again into alliance with Edward IV.



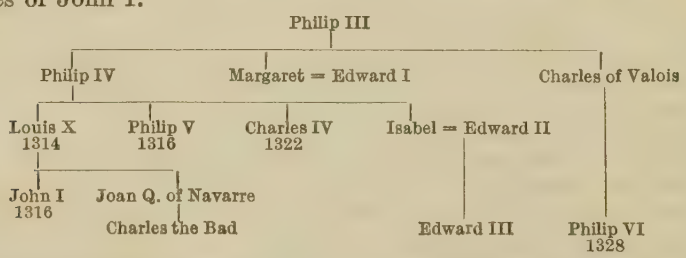
ARCHERY (*c.* 1340). Shooting at the Butts.

XXIX

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

(iv) France

Edward III had been reluctant to embark on an open war with France, wishing first to finish with Scotland. But his poor success with the Scots, their alliance with France and the consequent attack on Gascony having convinced him that the two quarrels were as one, he began energetically, and by laying a claim to the throne of France made it clear that the war was to be a desperate one. He asserted that, as nephew of the late king, he was nearer to him in blood than Philip VI, who was a cousin, the claim of Charles the Bad of Navarre being barred by the succession of the uncles of John I.



Whether Edward was a prey to a wild ambition, or thought it good policy to demand more than he could hope to obtain, we cannot now judge. It would have been hardly possible to avoid a war with France, for the sailors and merchants on both sides of the Channel had been practically at war for some years, while the desertion of Gascony, could that have been possible to a valiant young monarch, would have been considered a shameful piece of cowardice. Trade "followed the flag" in those days, and loud would have been the outcry both in England and in Gascony at such a calamity. The south of France was still more suspicious and unfriendly towards the north of France than it was to either England or Spain: its traditions, language and interests were all against a submission to the king at Paris.

Edward, again, probably felt that to style himself King of France would be a suitable reply to those whose scruples, real or

alleged, hindered them from joining him against the liege lord to whom they had sworn homage; and it allowed him, with a fine appearance of right, to support claimants to the duchy of Brittany and the county of Artois, whose local influence might make them useful allies. Moreover, it furnished him with arguments in reply to the papal exhortations, and with some excuse for the grand promises he was making to the emperor and the Flemings.

The ground on which Edward claimed the French crown was almost the same as that on which Bruce had claimed the Scottish crown, but consistency was of no value to the minds of those days, and the spectacle of a king of France and a king of England each supporting candidates to Flanders, Scotland, Brittany and Artois, whose claims were mutually contradictory and even contradicted the principles set forth, respectively, by the kings themselves, did not appear in any way absurd to those—emperor, pope, great ecclesiastics, minor sovereigns—to whom the two kings each sent letters explaining their claims and grievances.

The struggle between England and France was, in fact, of European importance. Potentates on all sides were drawn into it, even if only as masters of troops whom they could lend, for a payment, to one or other monarch. From the Baltic to the Mediterranean, bankers, traders and seafarers were personally involved. Genoa sent Philip companies of skilled cross-bowmen. Financiers of Lombardy and Florence tried to profit by loaning huge sums to the English king, and when they were ruined the catastrophe to Italian finance brought about something like revolution in the Italian cities. The chaos in Flanders enabled the German Hansa cities to obtain the control of the trade of northern Europe. Both Italians and Spaniards were recognised as enemies by the English; Gascons, Flemings and Germans as friends.

It was really a commercial war between northern and southern maritime interests. But to England herself the ill-judged attempt of Edward to seize the French crown was a calamity, for it prolonged the war indefinitely. When Philip VI had been heavily defeated at Crécy, he might well have given up to Edward the fiefs in Aquitaine to which he had a real right, without suffering disgrace or unpopularity, but he could not, even in the worst disaster, surrender the crown and the independence of the kingdom.

The English king intended to make his attack on France from the north, with the aid of the great alliance for which he had paid so much.

The Flemish cities naturally performed no more than they had undertaken: like the duke of Brabant, they desired to be safe—"to swim between two waters." Antwerp gladly set up a wool market and welcomed Queen Philippa and a lavish English court, which established itself for two years there (1338–40), while Edward went in state to visit the emperor, Louis of Bavaria, at Coblentz (1338), there to draw up a treaty which he fondly hoped would bring

a great German army to help him to invade France. Splendid ceremonies took place; emperor and king sat on two thrones in the market-place, and the emperor solemnly created Edward "Vicar of the Empire," and handed to him the imperial banner, to give him authority over any princes who might come to fight. Edward appealed to the Emperor to do him justice on Philip "calling himself king of France," who had usurped his crown, and the Emperor—an old man, excommunicated and almost powerless—responded by declaring Philip deposed and Edward the true king of France. English money flowed like water, and the Rhine cities made huge profits.

The elaborate scheme was typical of the age, as was the result, that by the time everything was correctly arranged the season was too late for campaigning, and Edward retired to Flanders, having exhausted his treasure in purchasing a set of empty promises (1339).

The French king troubled little about the Anglo-German league. He had let loose all the naval forces he could, especially the pirate-sailors of Normandy, who boasted that they would now make a second Norman conquest of England. Portsmouth had been burned and Southampton sacked: Guernsey and the Isle of Wight were plundered: the Cinque Ports defended themselves valiantly, but Hastings was burnt.

Not until 1340, four years from the declaration of war, did England make a national effort. The king had come home. He had left four earls behind him in Flanders as pledges for the debts he owed, and to the archbishop of Treves, who had loaned him a great sum, he had pledged his crown, the queen's crown and his little crown.

He obtained from Parliament more money, and collected a fleet of 300 vessels, with which he made direct for Sluys, then a fine open harbour, where the French fleet was assembled.

The battle of Sluys is the first English naval battle of which we have an account, but it could never have been won if the sailors of the Cinque Ports, the Solent and the east coast had not long been accustomed to take their ships into sea dangers and war dangers as part of their ordinary business, and had not, in the past seventy or eighty years of chronic fighting with their neighbours, learned what their strong and weak points were.

When the English at sunrise on June 24 caught sight of the enemy they beheld a forest of masts, and soon perceived that the ships were lashed together with chains and fitted up with barricades and tall wooden turrets, or "castles," the idea being to render the whole as much as possible like a floating and fortified island. The English king called to his companions to be of good courage and dismayed for naught, "for he that shall do battle for me to-day will have the blessing of God Almighty; and every man shall have whatever he can take." Seeing, however, that the tide did not serve to float his navy in to the attack, he held off till it did

and manœuvred to get the ships to windward. Having at last secured "the weathergage" (thenceforth the prime tactics of English sailors until the coming of steamships), he proceeded to tempt the enemy, 500 strong, out of shelter. The English sailors hoisted their sails half-mast high, and made as if about to fly. The enemy thereupon unlashed their great chains and got ready to chase, "and with that our ships sailed back upon them and the battle began with the sound of trumpets, drums, viols and tabors and other kinds of music."

Edward III, or his admirals, Robert Lord Morley and John Crab, a veteran Flemish sailor of fortune, had struck out the lines on which many a sea fight would be fought until Trafalgar. The ideas seem simple, but manœuvring of any kind was a mystery in those times, though it is clear that tacking was now understood. The fight, once begun, was fought partly by archery (the artillery of that age), and partly by the boarding tactics and hand-to-hand fighting which always remained a favourite English method. The victory was complete, and England was saved from the invasion which Philip VI had contemplated.

The news of so great a victory induced some of the king's allies to join him at last in the invasion of France (1340), and Tournai was besieged. Philip could not raise the siege by force of arms, but he persuaded the dowager countess of Hainault, his sister, and the mother of Queen Philippa, to leave her religious seclusion and come to the camp to implore the allied commanders to cease shedding blood and to make a truce. As Edward's allies were only anxious to get the pay promised to them at the least cost to themselves, they listened, and Edward was compelled to yield to his saintly mother-in-law's entreaties, and made a truce just when Tournai was on the very point of surrender.

The truce was prolonged; but it did not prevent Edward from becoming in his turn "an ally" of the claimant duke of Britanny, and conducting chivalrous raids and feats of daring in that country which covered with glory himself and his especial friends, such as Sir Walter Manny the Hainaulter, Sir John Chandos, and Henry of Derby, the heir of Lancaster, but which had no effect on the general situation and cost much money.

The king even celebrated his barren exploits by creating a new order of knighthood. He had rebuilt the castle of Windsor, which had long been the principal royal home, and there he made a chapel to St. George, his own and the nation's patron saint, and made a brotherhood of knights of St. George or "the blue garter." The first feast of this famous Order was held in 1344, and to it Edward invited all gallant knights and squires who would come, sending heralds to announce it into Scotland, France, Flanders, Burgundy and the "Empire of Almayne," with whom the English knights performed splendid tournaments.

All this fame and splendour, though it pleased both the nobles

and the common people well enough at the moment, was clearly waste. The next year Edward shamefully repudiated his debts to the Bardi, the greatest merchants in Italy, and to other Italian companies. Immediately after, the citizens of Ghent conceived a distaste for the English alliance, partly because Edward was believed to be intriguing to obtain the countship for one of his sons, partly, doubtless, on account of his financial dishonesty, and partly because they were tired of Jacques van Artevelde who, having served their turn, was now accused of pride and tyranny. A sudden riot in Ghent resulted in his assassination (1346), but though his death hampered Edward, it did not end the Anglo-Flemish alliance.

In the meantime the wise and gallant Henry of Derby, now duke of Lancaster, had gone to Guienne, and under his leadership the province had sprung to arms against the French king. He and his skilled archers had won a splendid victory at Auberoche, 1345, over a French feudal force of many times their own number before Edward could get together supplies, troops and ships sufficient to come to their aid. It seems, therefore, that the famous campaign of Crécy resulted from a sudden change of plan. The king had intended to go to Guienne, but as Lancaster was victorious there it was suggested to him to attack the enemy nearer to his centre of power and in the district most dangerous to England—Normandy. To do so would secure the advantage of a surprise; Normandy, besides, was undefended and full of riches to plunder; if the French king could be found and beaten, Guienne would be safe at once.

These were good reasons, and the English army was accordingly landed at La Hogue. For weeks they ravaged Normandy unresisted. They burnt all the shipping along the coast that it might no longer threaten the Cinque Ports. They stormed Caen, larger than any town in England but London; they plundered towns and villages, and sent the fleet home laden with enormous booty. The wealth of Normandy astonished them, although England was by no means a poor country.

Reinforcements poured across the Channel to this land of promise, and raiding parties harried far up the Seine and burned the suburbs of Paris.

That Edward had little serious thought of seizing the crown seems evident from his prudence in turning aside from the capital. It was with the greatest difficulty that he contrived to cross the Seine, a marvellous engineering feat for those days. By the time he had done this a French army was on its way and Edward made for the great seaport of Calais, so long a menace to English ports and ships. He intended to take it and to hold it as his own gate into France, a better one than the ports of the unreliable Flemings.

The north of France was not likely to be enthusiastically loyal to Philip VI. Part of it had but lately been Flemish. The little county of Ponthieu had recently been English—as Margaret's dowry

—and Edward desired to fight the pitched battle which was inevitable, in a land which was lawfully his own.

So it was that the famous battle of Crécy came about. The English were desperate, for there was no base and no fleet for them to retreat to if they could not force their way on. The incidents of the battle are well known: the superiority of the English archers to the Genoese crossbowmen; the prowess of the young prince of Wales; the English king, for once not indulging in the *mêlée*, attempting to direct the struggle from a windmill as an observation post, and the slaughter of the gallant but obsolete French cavaliers —only five barons were left to rally round their wounded king. At last Philip VI was forced from the field and fled to Broie. "Open, open, Castellan," he cried; "it is unfortunate France!"

The siege of Calais was immediately begun by the English. Ships with all manner of supplies came across the narrow strait, and Edward needed not to return to London, lengthy as the siege proved to be.

It was characteristic of his "chivalrous" temper that the stout resistance of these burghers and sailors stirred him to fierce resentment, though the spirited fighting of a gallant French knight in hand-to-hand combat won him to such delight that he set him free and bestowed on him a valuable chaplet of pearls. Edward differed little from the defeated Philip, whose first act was to order the execution of a number of his crossbowmen and infantry, declaring that their cowardice had lost the day.

Edward's idea of warfare was, like his entire character, a curious compound of the chivalrous and the practical. He was herein perfectly representative of his age, especially in England. The chivalry of courts had by this time developed into an over elaborate, extravagant style of manners, confined to the wealthy aristocracy. When Edward could do as he liked he shone in gorgeous pageants, and prided himself on his own and his nobles' feats with lance and shield, cased in plate armour and mounted on heavy, carefully trained steeds. But he took care to direct his fleets according to the advice of practical seamen, and to have plenty of archers and steady pikemen in important posts on the battlefield. Nor did the brilliant knights of England entertain that contempt for archers and infantry that the continental aristocracy showed. Lords and knights, squires, yeomen, archers and Welsh daggermen had under Edward I fought, as they continued to do, in combined force, because there was among them little cleavage of class distinctions and none of interests. This is what is meant by terming the English troops a national army under a national king, and it was this power of combination which enabled Edward III to act at Crécy as a general rather than a tournament hero, and by his own dispositions and the courage and skill of the army to defeat French armies in which only the aristocratic cavalry were of value, and the foot-soldiers mere arrow-targets.

The doggedness with which the blockade of Calais was continued was also something unusual. There were the strongest reasons for persisting, since Calais had long been "a resort of corsairs and a den of thieves," as an Italian of the day allowed, and the Flemings were as much bent upon its capture as the English. When it fell Edward caused the inhabitants to depart and re-peopled it with English; then, in the early summer of 1347, he came home to enjoy the fruits of his splendid triumphs. The invasion of Normandy had, as he had foreseen, drawn off the French armies from Guienne, and Lancaster had so well pursued them that all western Aquitaine, as far as Poitiers, now recognised the English king. Brittany was also subdued, and Scotland tamed by the captivity of her king: an embassy even arrived from Germany, where Louis IV had died, to invite Edward to accept the imperial crown, a phantom splendour which his good sense caused him to reject. About the same time he agreed with Philip VI upon a truce, including Scotland, which lasted till the French king's death in 1350 dissolved it.

The English had left behind them half France a wilderness of ruins, plunged in the miseries of famine and lawlessness. They had brought away so huge a quantity of spoil as actually altered the standard of wealth and luxury at home. "There was not a woman of any family who had not something from the spoils of Caen, Calais and other cities beyond sea: dresses, furs, cushions and household utensils, table napkins and necklaces, glass and silver cups, shawls and linen, were seen scattered over England in all people's houses." And many of those who had actually fought made a fortune out of the ransoms of their prisoners.

The war and its results are said to have put back the civilisation of France by more than a century; in England the evil effects were moral. The sudden acquisition of wealth stimulated greed; the thirst for riches became a leading motive, and war came to be looked on almost as a hopeful speculation.

In the midst of the popular elation the terrible pestilence called the *Black Death* suddenly attacked England (1348–9), and compelled a cessation of every kind of business, including the war. Even when it recommenced the population and resources of the country were so much thinned that no complete armies could be sent for several years. The king had to be content with mere raids, waged principally by troops hired from foreign countries, especially from Germany, a land which had in the past one hundred years learned to regard war as a natural condition.

Nevertheless, in 1350, Edward was obliged to gather a fleet on the south coast, to intercept a Spanish fleet which, under cover of trade with Flanders, was attacking English shipping. The fight took place off Winchelsea, and the stories of it read like a rehearsal for the Armada, for the Spanish ships were great and well armed. They towered above the little English vessels "as

castles over cottages." But their crows-nests were filled, not with archers, but with slingers from the Balearic Isles: as the king of Majorca had fallen on the French side at Crécy they no doubt yearned for revenge. The plan now typical was followed by Edward, who was to the fore like the Black Prince, with Lord Morley again as admiral. First the archers outshot the slingers and cross-bowmen till they hid their heads behind their bulwarks, then the enemy was boarded and desperate hand-to-hand fighting finally won the day. The king only succeeded in capturing a Spanish ship as his own foundered, and the prince of Wales and his crew were rescued from their sinking vessel only just in time by Lancaster. Seventeen ships were taken before dark, and the English fleet was ready to continue the action next day, but the rest of the Spanish fleet had withdrawn; and in the next year the seaports of Castile and Biscay made a truce with their rivals of Aquitaine, and their pirate raids ceased.

There was little fighting overseas for the next five years. Philip VI had died in 1350 and John II was now king. But in 1355 the Black Prince (as the prince of Wales is invariably called) renewed the war and conducted a terrible raid into Languedoc, returning with the spoils of fifty towns to Bordeaux, his proud and wealthy capital—for Aquitaine had been placed under his rule by Edward. Next year he went northwards on a like errand, but King John, with an army twice as large, blocked his way near Poitiers, and by skilful strategy isolated the English force. The position was so desperate that the prince actually offered great concessions to be allowed to march his men home, but the French king expected a complete triumph and refused everything but surrender.

The battle of Poitiers (1356) was a still more amazing success than Crécy, for the French had learned nothing, and again opposed a solid column of men and horses to the unerring fire of the archers, while the English had discovered the art of a simple manœuvre, and with perfect courage detached two parties to attack the mass on its flanks. Captivity or slaughter was the fate of the entire French force; King John and a crowd of his nobles were taken first through Bordeaux and then through London, not from the insolence of triumph, but in order that the knowledge of the decisive victory might be spread. The prince of Wales declared Lord Audley to have distinguished himself above all others, and presented him with some valuable estates in token of his admiration; Audley, equally characteristically, declared that to his four Cheshire squires he owed his exploits, and gave the whole amongst them.

France was really defenceless now. The desultory warfare which followed could only render her more wretched, yet it was impossible to the Dauphin and his counsellors to surrender the whole kingdom to the English sovereign, and Edward would take no less, until 1360. Only then was a peace made, at Bretigny, by which Edward took the south-western half of France in full sovereignty (*i.e.* paying

no homage), with the overlordship of Brittany, and relinquished his claim to the crown.

The terms of the Treaty of Bretigny were so severe that King John met with invincible passive resistance from his son, the Dauphin Charles, and the governing interests in general, as to carrying them out. He had been set free on a pledge to return if he could not keep his word, and he did so (1362) not unwillingly. His " imprisonment " was in the Savoy palace by the Thames, where he spent the rest of his days as an honoured and expensive guest of King Edward. France, under the patient guard of the Dauphin, bided her time for recovery.

The principal cause of the misery of France was shared by Aquitaine as well, and rapidly spread into other countries. This was the notorious system of the Free Companies.

The English king had ceased to collect armies by the obsolete feudal method. The pick of his forces, the navy and the archers were, in any case, non-feudal. He used the plan begun by Edward I of arranging with warlike lords, each of whom contracted to supply a specified number of cavalry, infantry, or archers, at a specified wage. The king gave the contractors lump sums, and they enlisted the men. Soldiers hoping for plunder thronged to serve the most successful leaders, and it became the interest of captains and soldiers to keep together permanently and take service as a whole band under the king of England or the duke of Aquitaine. When a truce caused the discharge of a company, its captain had to find it other maintenance and wages: this led to the seizing of castles or even towns, and to taking service under any lord—French, Spanish, Italian—who had a war on hand. The system made soldiering professional, voluntary and mercenary, and not only prolonged wars but ruined the countries where these greedy troops hunted incessantly for plunder. Englishmen, such as Sir Hugh Calverly and Sir John Hawkwood, began them, Italians and Frenchmen followed the example; later on the Germans outdid all others in the worst traditions.

When the death of John II dissolved the Treaty of Bretigny, the temporary triumph of England on the continent was over. Charles V, " Le Sage," was already learning from the famous Breton, Du Guesclin, how to war by other than feudal methods, when a contested succession in Castile formed a new focus of war, and France profited (1367).

The Black Prince, duke of Aquitaine, was persuaded by Pedro the Cruel to provide him with troops. The Free Companies flocked to Spain; Pedro, by means of English armies, won a brief success, broke his promises, paid no man, and left his allies a prey to disease in a burning climate.

The whole affair had been a wild mistake on the prince's part. Aquitaine suffered both from the actual losses of the campaign and the subsequent taxation to pay for it. Discontent became

revolt, and the French king intervened and invaded Gascony with great success (1369).

The prince of Wales was himself stricken by disease; his eldest son, his mother and his best friends, Chandos and Audley, all died in 1369. He put down revolts with great harshness, and at last, at the taking of Limoges (1370) burst into a horrible Plantagenet rage and ordered a massacre of the inhabitants. For burghers to dare to resist in arms their feudal lords, and to resist with some success, seems to have been an unforgivable sin; burghers "ought" to be peaceful and submit dutifully to such pillage as befell them.

Edward III was hardly capable of directing the war any longer. An old man of almost sixty, who had ruled and fought and enjoyed himself vehemently from boyhood, he was worn out, and during the absence of the prince of Wales the next surviving son, John of Gaunt (Gand, Ghent), held the reins of power and easily swayed the king. Jealous of his elder brother, he ignored the warnings from Gascony and left him unsupported.

In 1271 the Black Prince, mortally ill, sailed home with his wife and their little son Richard, born at Bordeaux. His influence stirred the old king to action. Once more a fleet and an army was assembled, and the king and the prince, carried on a litter, took charge. But contrary winds kept them tossing in the Channel for five weeks, and then forced them into port again. "God is for the king of the French," said the old king, and the voyage to Gascony gave way to a grandiose scheme of Gaunt's. A gigantic raid was set on foot; from Calais, John of Gaunt led a magnificent army round Paris, plundering and devastating Champagne and Burgundy. Then they crossed the Loire into a land already ruined. Du Guesclin and his captains constantly harried them: food was lacking, horses died, and in the end the incapable John of Gaunt led less than half of his men, ragged and starving, into Bordeaux and demanded succour from those he had been sent to relieve.

This was the last effort England was capable of making, and Gaunt had wasted it. All that was left of Edward's conquests was Calais and the narrow strip of coast from Bordeaux to Bayonne, which the fleet could protect.

The plague had come again in 1362 and 1369. The Black Prince died in 1376. The heir was a child, and the wealth and power of the land lay at the mercy of the unscrupulous, incompetent John of Gaunt and his party of financiers, lawless northern barons and greedy courtiers, while Spanish fleets swept the Channel, destroying an English squadron off Rochelle (1372), and the French once more began to raid the south coast. So gloomily closed the reign of the once brilliant and popular Edward III.

XXX

ENGLAND IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

(i) Town and Country and the Black Death

Everywhere the fourteenth century was an age of turbulence and of extremes. It is clear that the rapid development of the thirteenth century had produced so much activity and prosperity that different interests had reached the point where they began to clash and to compete. With wealth came luxury and greed, commerce led to rivalry and jealousy; and the quarrels and wars which followed, in their turn fostered greater ambition, violence and selfishness, while at the same time they inspired those who suffered to resist, the more so because the general progress in wealth and power had roused expectations among all classes which often met with bitter disappointment.

Probably the universal agitation was to some degree connected with the remarkable convulsions of land and sea in this age. In Henry III's time a volcano had burst forth in Guernsey, flames shot up from the sea and the surrounding shores were covered with ashes. In the ten years after 1274, five earthquakes were felt in England, three of them so severe as to shake down churches, towers and cathedrals. There were periods of incessant rain, resulting in great floods; tempests levelled trees and crops, inundations of the sea swept the coasts, and some of the islands of Frisia disappeared. In the fourteenth century a great tract of land was drowned and the present Zuyder Zee formed, and from that time the east coast havens and the Wash began to silt up much more rapidly, so that Norwich and Lincoln ceased to be ports. In England the storms were less severe, but Winchelsea was entirely swallowed up by the sea, and Edward I built a new town, with noble walls and gates and spacious streets and fine public buildings, on the low cliff which then saw the sea wash its base, but now looks over green pastures; for it was scarcely completed before the coastal currents altered again, and in the fifteenth century Winchelsea began to lose its trade, sank rapidly into a fishing village, and at length was deserted.

Such bad seasons ruined many harvests and often caused famine. There was as yet little attempt made to store corn, except in the immense stone barns of abbeys or bishops, and as road

communication was still very bad, medieval roads seldom being metalled, it frequently happened that one county was starving while another had plenty. The cost of carting corn from Bedfordshire to Derbyshire is said to have amounted, in modern reckoning, to £15 a ton. It was even counted three and a half days' journey from Southwark to Canterbury, on horseback, whether for princes or pilgrims.

Nevertheless the population of England, which had trebled between 1066 and 1300, went on increasing. There was still abundance of land for agriculture, while tillage had improved and produced more food to the acre; and from 1216 till the death of Edward I the English shires had been safe from war and its ravages, except for certain districts on the Welsh Marches.

But in the fourteenth century England began again to suffer from war. The Barons' wars of Edward II were conducted with more destruction than the war of Simon de Montfort—*e. g.* the vale of Duffield was so badly ravaged that the Belper coal-pits ceased to be worked—while the Scottish invasions half ruined the north, as far as Lancaster and York. On the other hand, the vigorous working of minerals in the surface mines of Yorkshire and Derbyshire, up to 1348, was exhausting the supply and even causing a scarcity of timber and fuel in those regions. These causes, together with the effects of the Black Death, may account for the arrest of population in the north, where metal industries developed no further, and roads once well travelled became deserted. It seems to have been in this epoch that the north began to be left somewhat behind by the south in the progress of civilisation, and to regard itself as a separated and unfriendly neighbour of the richer half of England, south of Trent.

Hitherto the natural reserves of the forests—honey, swine-feed, wildfowl, fuel, building timber—had furnished a large part of the support of the people, but the activities of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries made great inroads upon them, and the outlaws, who appear to have increased during the time of Henry III, and to have found a good living in the woods, were no longer safe in them from justice under Edward III. Oak and ash and Scotch fir were giving place to heath and brushwood. This led to a greater use of "sea-coal," but nails for house-building and lead for roofing and pipes became very expensive. The cleavage between north and south must have been increased by two powerful attractions which drew population southwards: (1) the French war, which called the adventurous abroad and took shipping and mercantile traffic to the south-eastern ports; (2) the increase in our production of wool and in the allied art of weaving cloth. The districts in which the cloth manufacture flourished most busily were the eastern counties and the south-west, while wool export went on from the southern and eastern ports.

In the midst of warlike and political commotion, the first bit of

textile machinery had been introduced into this country. It was an appliance so simple that it never attracted any notice in writing, and we only know that it had come into use from a drawing among a set of pictures of the occupations of daily life (*c.* 1340), and more certainly, from its effects: it was the *spinning-wheel.* In all likelihood it came to us from Flanders. But it was not a new object, merely a new use for a wheel, that of turning the spindle by its motion and thus winding the wool on to it more rapidly than human fingers could do by twisting the spindle. The use of such a wheel, turned with one hand while with the other the woman drew the wool from her distaff, allowed larger quantities of wool or flax to be spun into yarn. It was this which enabled weavers to weave more cloth. The appliance was so rough and cheap that the poorest could use it; tenpence seems to have been the price of a good one (in Nottingham) at the end of the century, by which time spinning was a whole-time trade and a very ill-paid one. Yarn was also imported from Ireland.

There was, therefore, a demand for workmen and workwomen in the weaving districts, which were especially Norfolk, Kent, Somerset, Wilts and Dorset. Towns became full and over-full, abbeys and lords who could keep many sheep grew rich, and so did the weaving masters. One, Thomas Blanket of Bristol, is known by name (*c.* 1340). His plan was to buy up yarn in the country and to employ many weavers in his own buildings. More weaving meant more fulling, dyeing, finishing, etc., and led to better clothing at home and to a growing export trade, all of which increased wealth in towns and profoundly altered our commercial interests and policy.

The spinning wheel produced, also, a social change. The poor artisans produced yarn in plenty and the better-to-do women had less need to spin for their households. They had leisure, and now began to share in education and pleasure more commonly than before. Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* was a capitalist employer. The elegant spinning wheel for use in ladies' parlours did not appear till the fifteenth century.

The increase of wealth among townspeople produced much strife between classes who were jealous of each other. The old families who had long composed the merchant-gilds resented the formation of gilds for separate crafts. Tenants in abbey towns wanted the freedom of tenants in royal towns. Prosperous laymen no longer felt bound to respect starveling clerks. Fishing-ports could not believe that there were fish enough in the sea for all, but sought to monopolise. The men of Newcastle had burned Shields in 1264. The Cinque Ports continually quarrelled with Yarmouth and Southampton. Bristol fought a local lord for two years (1313–14), and had to be quelled by a royal army, for which the city revenged itself in 1326. Bury St. Edmunds, St. Albans and Coventry, rose more than once against their monastic lords. At

Oxford and Cambridge " town " turned upon " gown," and inflicted great damage and much loss of life upon the scholars and clergy. That in every case the royal or papal arm gave victory to the old privileged lords, did not convince the rebels; they were beaten only to rise up again in the outbreak of 1381. But the great struggle was deferred to that late date, partly by the excitement of the French war, partly by the catastrophe of the Black Death.

Up to 1348 there was no check to the prosperity of the southern part of England. Cloth, principally of the coarser kinds, was manufactured in quantities sufficient to allow of export to Ireland and Scandinavia, and to provide for a large home demand. When harvests were good and trade lively, or when victory sent home a fleet full of plunder, prosperity was seen at once, and England was

Woman with Distaff and Spindle Feeding Chickens.

filled with merry-making. Sharp contrasts were usual in the Middle Ages, and while the poor still housed in huts of clay, and townsmen were cramped in narrow tenements of wood and laths, noblemen were building castles more handsome than defensible, with open halls and wide windows; abbeys were for ever rebuilding and extending, and churches became more spacious. Beautiful window-work, spires and carving are characteristic of the style of the early fourteenth century, called the *Decorated* style. The windows are wide and subdivided by stone tracery in patterns. Arches have many ribs, and towers are patterned and battlemented.

Pleasure was sought out-of-doors or in the semi-public buildings of the Church; home life, at least in towns, must have become very unhealthy, for the walled space could not be increased, and the more prosperous a town became the more insanitary it was. Rubbish was flung into the street or the town ditch, the streets were obstructed by tanners, leather-workers or carpenters, pigs were apt to wander about, and scavenging was almost unknown; the open market-places were spoiled by the new tenements of the richer shop-keepers.

When the Black Death of 1348 reached England these crowded and filthy conditions proved disastrous. The pestilence, which had travelled from Asia, had reached first the Mediterranean ports, and from them swiftly advanced over the rest of Europe. It was brought to our south coast at Melcombe Regis (Weymouth) by a merchant ship, and in like manner to the Devon and Somerset harbours. In 1349 it desolated London and the rest of the country. This sickness was extremely infectious, and therefore was at its worst in crowded towns and in the monasteries. In the eastern counties and Yorkshire more than half of the entire population is said to have died. In some rural districts not so many perished, but a quarter or a fifth seems to have been the lowest proportion. The clergy suffered more than any other class, as they did not shrink from their duty of visiting the sick and burying the dead. The rich suffered less, though of them whole families were often swept away. In London the death-roll was headed by the mayor, the abbot of Westminster and two successive archbishops.

Before the close of 1349 many an abbey and priory had lost nearly the whole of its inhabitants; churches could not be served because no priests survived; the harvest of innumerable villages rotted on the ground for lack of reapers; mills were untenanted; in some parts villages were left uninhabited till the houses crumbled away, and even the churches, in course of time, fell to ruin. In the towns there was a total stoppage of business. The records of Norwich, Bristol, Leicester, Yarmouth and other towns, tell of grass-grown streets and deserted houses. On some great country estates no accounts could be made for the plague year. Sometimes no heirs survived to claim a holding or a house, which fell, as escheat, to the lord or the crown. Several thriving places never recovered the destruction of so many inhabitants. Had not the whole of Europe suffered as terribly, England would have lain an open prey to her enemies. Two years after the plague, Edward III could do no more than beat an enemy fleet back from Sandwich. There were not sufficient forces for pursuit. The Scots, who for a time were spared the plague, began to swear "by the foul death of the English," and gathered an army to plunder the defenceless northern counties, but at their muster by the Border the pestilence suddenly fell upon them and nearly all died.

The effects of the Black Death were disastrous in more than one sphere of the national life. As soon as the survivors had begun to recover themselves, a second pestilence swept the country, in 1361–2, and in 1369 a third. The depression of the nation may be seen by the sudden cessation of its most brilliant art, architecture. No one had either the means or the spirit to complete more churches, cathedrals, and castles in the lavish Decorated style. Masons and architects were dead, and with the building arts languished also the sister arts of carving, metal-working, and bell-founding. When architecture could again be indulged in, a new style was to be

developed, less beautiful and elaborate, easier to work mechanically, and dependent for its effect on the new art of making coloured glass—the Perpendicular style.

The only resource for the country parishes was for the bishops to send travelling friars to visit them. But the friars were no longer what they had been in Grosseteste's day. There were the same jealousies and hatreds among ecclesiastics as among laymen, and the sermons of the friars were too often bitter tirades against the monks or the parish clergy, or else clever begging sermons, designed to get popularity and gifts. The friars, said the parish priests (and so says Chaucer), absolved men and women at once for any sin if generous gifts were bestowed on them. The friars, said the monks, were sowers of sedition who taught villeins to resist their landlords and told them evil tales against the monastic houses. There was truth in both charges. The friars were poor men, and their sympathies were with the peasantry, and being under special papal protection they could dare to abuse rulers and the wealthy classes. The class which suffered least from the effects of the pestilences was that of the monks. Their numbers, it is true, had been cut down permanently by about one-half, but their wealth increased in consequence, as the expense of maintenance was less.

There were changes in the economic condition of England which had certainly begun before 1348, but which were developed rapidly after the Black Death, both in country and town.

In the country, and England was mostly country then, the services of villeins to their lords had been in some places already commuted for regular money payments, but in other cases, and especially on monastic estates, the services went on regularly. The death of such numbers of peasants and the wish to get into cultivation land which was often lying fallow for want of heirs and labour, caused at first a great demand for hired labour. Hitherto the free but poverty-stricken workman who could hire himself out had been in much worse condition than the thriving villein, tied to the soil indeed, but sure of his roof and his harvest. Now suddenly the hired labourers found themselves in such great request that they could get high wages: the stay-at-home villein wanted to go and do the like, and thought it hard that the mere evidence of the manor-roll on which his name and duties were written down should be sufficient to chain him and his family for ever to their fields. He accused his lord, and his lord's bailiff, of tyranny. In many districts the workmen banded together and compelled the landlord to pay a high wage by refusing to work otherwise. What we now name *Unions*, *Strikes* and *Boycotts* were well understood during the later Middle Ages, and often resorted to with success—the names alone are modern.

But the small country lords were as much aggrieved as their villeins. Every hired reaper or carter asked for higher wages, and unless the manor-lord paid them he was "boycotted." But the prices

of food had not risen, so that he did not make higher profits. Parliament listened to the complaint of the gentry who composed it, and promptly drew up a *Statute of Labourers* (1351), sanctioned by the king at once, forbidding any man to ask, or any employer to pay, more than twopence or threepence a day, a penny less than had been the regular wage just before the Black Death. There were prosecutions and punishments, and the labourers were filled with fierce resentment, but the Statute of Labourers was repeated again and again. The landowners, in the end, found it best to pay more, though not so much as the workmen claimed.

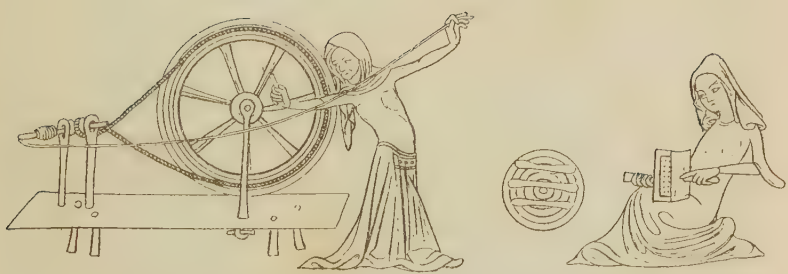
Consequently the manor lords looked for other remedies. Sometimes they gave up the effort to till their demesnes, and bargained with some one—perhaps a peasant who had saved money—to take over the land and the live stock on condition of rendering a certain sum yearly to the lord, and keeping any profit for himself. This was the system on which the customs duties were usually worked, and was called *farming:* our word *farmer*, therefore, is itself a record of the extension of this financial method to agriculture. Where the land was leased to a family for several lives, as was often the case on church lands, the result was to make the farm well-tilled and the tenants prosperous. But private landlords grew greedier as time went on, and preferred to let for short periods, hoping to get raised rents. Then the tenant could not venture to spend money on manuring, and the land was badly tilled. Another plan for the landowner was to set up sheep-breeding and let the arable land grow into pasture for them. As a flock of sheep only required one or two shepherds, instead of a throng of ploughmen and harvesters, he saved money in wages, and as the wool was in good demand for the growing cloth-making industry, sheep-farming was most profitable.

In the towns a great discontent prevailed among the workmen, for in proportion as the busy clothing towns, such as Beverley, Norwich, Winchester, Leicester, the towns of Somerset, the Cotswolds, or East Anglia, and other districts, increased their looms, the less likely it became that the workman would himself become a master. Apprentices could no longer look forward to being independent, or perhaps partners of their employers, only to being journeymen (*journée*, day-man), nor, on the other hand, did the burgesses see why they should admit mere hired hands to all the privileges they and their ancestors had worked and paid for during some two centuries. The craftsman of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was fond of insisting that his trade—weaving, tanning or dyeing, or making saddles, girdles or caps, or even pies—was a *Mistery;* it had secrets and demanded skill and knowledge which the gilds must keep to themselves, lest fraudulent persons should make bad goods and bring discredit on the profession and the nation. There was little chance that the gilds would let their serving-men become equals and rivals of themselves as masters and gild-members.

In consequence there appeared a cleavage between masters and men, because *capitalists*, or wealthy employers of large numbers of hands were now increasing, and as the government of the towns was wholly in the hands of the richer citizens who composed the gilds and paid most of the taxes, they used their power to protect their own monopoly, just as parliament sometimes made laws to protect the nobles and gentry.

After 1362 there occurred, also, an actual decline in the trade of the country. When so much of Aquitaine was lost, the commerce which the southerly ports (from Gloucester to Hastings) had long conducted with Bordeaux and Bayonne, fell off, and this created considerable hardship. The worse the war went, the worse off the merchants became and the more troublesome the government of the towns proved to be.

Finally, the feuds of political factions were mirrored in the contests of gilds and of classes, so that the various quarrels (including that of the Reforming with the Romanising clergy) tended to coalesce into one great agitation. It was thus that, first, the social rising of 1381, next, the political revolution of 1399, were wrought to explosion point.



Carding and Spinning with a Wheel (*c.* 1340).

XXXI

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

(ii) Chaucer's England

Although the Black Death made a cleavage in some of the lines on which the medieval development of England had run, this was not at once obvious. When the pestilence had passed life was resumed much as before by the wealthier classes, and it is chiefly their cheerful and splendid life which our first modern writer, Chaucer, describes in his delightful pages.

Geoffrey Chaucer's career illustrates the life of London and of the court. His father, a rich wine-importer and owner of taverns, probably acquired a court connection through one of the loans which the king from time to time asked of the City. Such loans, like the taxes, were usually raised, not by the mass of citizens but by a few capitalists who obtained from the Crown some monopoly or favour which partly repaid them. There was nothing remarkable, therefore, in the rich vintner's son becoming a page in the train of the king's second son, Lionel of Clarence (1357) and, later, in that of John of Gaunt. His duties took him on many travels in England and France, and later he went as a royal agent to Flanders and Italy. He became himself a landlord and man of business and was for some years a collector of customs in London.

From his *Canterbury Tales* and other poems, we get the impression that life was, for the well-to-do, joyous and active; on the awful scenes of the Black Death, which he must have remembered, he keeps silence. Chaucer wrote for a courtly audience, which wanted to be entertained. Therefore, when he deals with the poor or the middle class he shows the fun of them (*e. g.* the *Nun's Priest's Tale*); when he speaks gravely (as of the Poor Parson of the Village) he is brief. Gallant knights and beautiful ladies, tournaments and processions and wonderful adventures take up most of his attention.

There was nothing unnatural in this: after the Black Death, and while the long war was still running its course, the contrast between wealth and poverty grew sharper; war and finance together created a number of very wealthy magnates, but above all the manner in which Edward III and his sons waged war increased among the nobility that arrogance which Edward I had spent a lifetime in curbing. Edward III prided himself on imitating his grandfather, but

had little understanding of that great king's policy. The nobles were now powerful because of their troops, and to support them and an ever-increasing extravagance they grasped at lands and wealth.

The famous chronicler of this age, Froissart (a Hainaulter in Queen Philippa's service), loves to record the costly splendour of the nobles, English or French, and their exploits and courtesies. This, to him, was history. His reports and the romantic episodes of Chaucer's poems are sufficiently alike to show us why Edward's courtiers considered their age to be the age of chivalry, and why they were popular, at least in London, and until after the Peace of Bretigny.

Probably Chaucer had witnessed the royal Tournament at Windsor, for which the king had the Round Tower built, and where he "held a Round Table" in fancied imitation of King Arthur, as described in contemporary romances. He had seen the streets of London hung with tapestry to welcome the victorious Black Prince after Poitiers, when King John was treated as the guest of honour and the prince rode beside him like a squire on a little hobby, or cob.

More than once the king accepted the hospitality of some great merchant. Mayor Pickard entertained four kings together (of England, Scotland, France and Cyprus) —at all events there was no dread of brawling followers or of extortion following on the display of so great wealth. Once Edward returned the City's courtesies by attending its tournament dressed in robes like the Mayor, his four sons and some nobles as the two sheriffs and the Aldermen, and in the City's name they held the lists as champions and, of course, won the day for London. The city tournament ground was at Smithfield; its butts of archery at Newington, and it possessed a forest of its own (Epping) where citizens could hunt the wild game.

Chaucer's pictures of faithful knights who perform wonderful feats of arms and of magnanimity suggest what were the ideals which the self-conscious chivalry of the day professed to admire, and even in real life did occasionally exhibit. One instance of the perfect knight is Sir John Chandos, the best friend of the Black Prince, who never turned from danger, or sought for personal gain. He strove to turn the prince from his oppression of Guienne, risked all to save from destruction an insolent earl whose wilfulness had wrecked the campaign, and finally lost his life trying to rescue a squire borne down by terrific odds. Or there is Sir Walter Manny, renowned for a hundred feats, the outspoken advocate for the burghers of Calais, or, a still more splendid instance, Henry, earl of Derby and duke of Lancaster. The son of that Earl Henry who helped Edward III to overcome Mortimer, Henry of Derby had from youth the character of a brilliant warrior; in Scotland, Flanders and France, and at sea he was in almost every fight possible. In the intervals of the great war he hurried to

fight as a Crusader in Spain, Cyprus and Prussia, and beguiled the tedium of an occasional siege or truce by jousts (friendly trials of skill, but extremely dangerous) in which he was ever the victor. On the field he treated his prisoners with chivalrous courtesy, yet when he stormed Poitiers (which had refused to surrender) he let his troops massacre all, women and children included.

The king heaped honour upon him; he was made earl of Derby, earl of Lincoln, and duke of Lancaster, and entrusted with the highest commands and embassies. His private wealth enabled him to equip armies and fleets of his own. The enemy regarded him as the soul of honour: he was religious, charitable and temperate. When he visited the pope at Avignon on Edward's behalf he arrived with 200 horse, and was met by such a great concourse that his suite took the entire day in getting across the bridge. For six weeks in his palace, "the joys of feasting and drinking were always ready for all who wished to come and refresh themselves, and everything was so carefully provided that all the court was astonished—before his arrival 100 casks of wine had been got ready in his cellar—he showed such courtesy to all, especially to the pope and the cardinals, that they said the wide world had not his fellow."

His judicial combat with Otto of Brunswick is a good specimen of a favourite form of duel in those times. Lancaster had set off to Prussia to help the Teutonic knights in their perpetual "crusade" against the heathen Lithuanians, exactly like Chaucer's knight. He was trapped on the way, in the free-booting manner of High Germany (Bavaria, Austria) and much like Richard I, and paid 3000 gold crowns for ransom without giving up his expedition. But when he reached the scene of war a truce had been proclaimed and he had to return home. He then narrowly escaped a second trap laid for so wealthy a prize by Otto, son of the duke of Brunswick, and this time Lancaster publicly announced his indignation.

Hereupon Otto wrote to give him the lie and challenged him to combat in some place chosen by the king of France (1352). King John, a pattern of chivalry, invited his enemy's best general, and the son of his own paid ally, to fight their duel at Paris. Here the French nobles endeavoured to make peace, and Lancaster was willing but Otto refused. Each combatant then mounted his war-horse, fully armed save for helmet and spear, which were handed to them by their esquires. Otto, however, trembled so violently that he was unable to put on his helmet or grasp his lance, whereupon he proposed to make up the quarrel. But Lancaster now refused—it was too late; and Otto therefore had to submit himself as a conquered, or surrendered, champion to the ruling of King John, who caused him publicly to retract his accusation against Lancaster and then entertained the two at a rich banquet, where he formally reconciled them. On Lancaster, as victor and hero, the king wanted to bestow magnificent gifts, but the duke would accept nothing but the precious relic of a thorn from the Saviour's Crown of

Thorns, with which he travelled home to meet another royal welcome from his own king.

The splendid duke had no son to succeed him when he died in 1361, an event reckoned as a national misfortune, and his daughter Blanche—Chaucer's patroness—brought his vast estates and wealth to her husband, Edward's third surviving son, John of Gaunt.

(iii) Wyclif's England

By the beginning of the fourteenth century it is clear that the monasteries were ceasing to fulfil the purpose for which they had originally been founded. They had become admirably organised houses of business, in which, if a few monks might lead tranquil, comfortable lives, most were actively engaged in overseeing many branches of industry conducted on a great scale: breweries, gardens, granaries, bakeries; the management of sheep and the export of wool; mines and forges; wages and rents; taxes and lawsuits; journeys, to London or to the papal court; controversies with bishops, judges or royal agents.

Every monastery had a department for the entertainment of travellers, another for the relief of poverty by regular doles of bread and beer, and yet others for the copying of books and the instruction of choir-boys and novices; these last were, however, becoming less and less important, for book-copying was becoming a regular trade, so that writers, illuminators and bookbinders could be found in most rich towns, and fine volumes were articles of both home and foreign commerce, while the abbeys now did their part in education by sending students to the university, for, now that vicars had been established in every country parish which belonged to an abbey, the monks themselves were not responsible for the services. The religious side of the cloister, in fact, was almost entirely overshadowed by the secular. As for missionary efforts, these were not to be expected, for the purpose with which great men founded religious houses, it must be remembered, was not that of doing good to the neighbourhood—which was infinitely better served by the clergy of the churches—but of securing that prayers would be said for the founders' souls, just as the monks gave alms for the good of their own souls. The only foundations intended to benefit the poor were the hospitals, rather numerously founded after the Crusades began, which were usually poor institutions depending on the constant charity of the people of the locality.

It followed that those who wanted to study betook themselves to the university, and those who sought to devote themselves to a purely devout life found a better resort than a convent: they became hermits (or anchorites). During the fourteenth century there must have been a considerable number of them, both men and women. They were dependent for bodily sustenance upon the goodwill of others perhaps the rector or vicar, or a charitable lady at the

manor-house, or the sisters of a neighbouring nunnery. Often they remained for many years actually without moving from the cell beside the church, or the lonely hut, which had been assigned to them, at all events in the case of women: the hermits often undertook works of charity, such as mending a bridge, a task considered so fitting that before 1500 many bridges had a permanent hermit, who collected tolls for repairs.

Among certain of these recluses and hermits a religious literature arose. They sought to understand the scriptures and to advance in devotion, and some were learned scholars. They wrote letters and books for each other to study, and some of those which have come down to us are very beautiful, and so clearly expressed as to be easily understood even now. *The Again-bite of Inwit* (or "Prick of Conscience") was written by a clerk of Oxford, Richard Rolle, who retired to his native Yorkshire and led a holy life in a cell at Hampole, near Doncaster, till he died in the Black Death year. Rolle's poems and other works soon became known and have made his name famous, but most of such pious anchorites lived and died unknown except among their neighbours, who reverenced them deeply and would often ask their advice, so that they had a very real influence on the religious life of the age. They are termed *Mystics*.

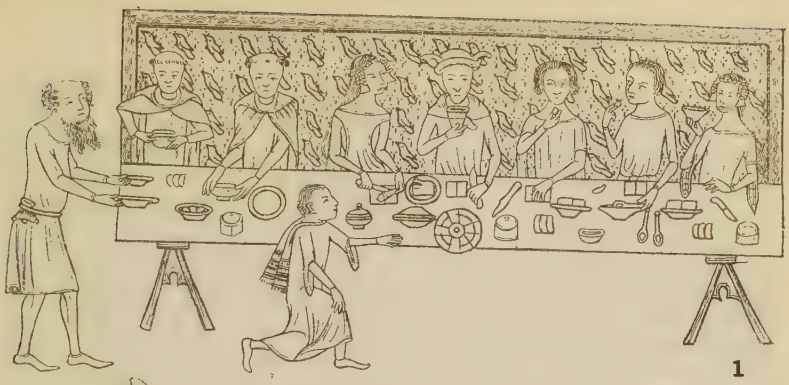
A more regular and active influence of religion upon the people was, naturally, wielded by the numerous parish clergy, who continued up to the Black Death to develop the scope of the Church on the lines admirably organised in the previous century.

But there is ample evidence that the higher clergy, especially the bishops, were growing out of touch with their clergy and flocks, although from the beginning of the fourteenth century several good English bishops, such as Melton, at York, conscientiously discharged their duties and retained the respect of the people.

This was a direct effect, in the first place, of the wealth of the Church and the royal habit of bestowing bishoprics on officials; in the second place, of the moral decline of the papacy. For as the tendency of the past three centuries had been to concentrate ecclesiastical authority in the hands of the papacy, a collapse in its moral and intellectual standard was bound to exercise a calamitous effect throughout Western Christianity.

Curiously enough, the larger the papal claims had become to control sovereigns and nations, the less capacity the papal government had shown in managing its immediate subjects in Rome. By the beginning of the fourteenth century the violence of the holy city and its neighbourhood had grown so wild that ecclesiastics and pilgrims carried their lives in their hands from day to day. In 1308, Pope Clement V finally abandoned Rome altogether and betook himself, with the entire papal court and government, to the city of Avignon, on the lower Rhone.

Avignon was a town of what had once been the kingdom of Burgundy and a part of the Empire. It had become, therefore, one



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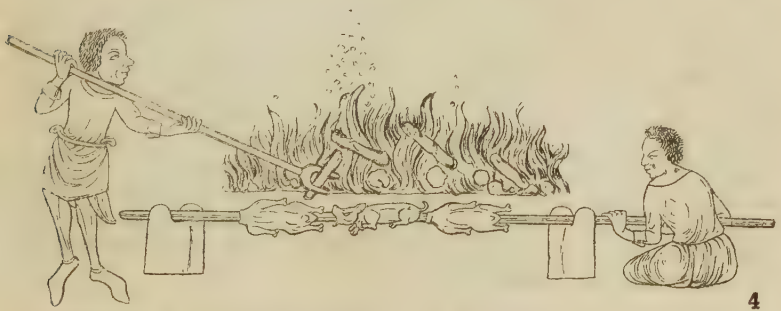

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1. The Feast. 2. Carving and Serving. 3. Cooking. 4. Roasting on a Spit. *c.* 1340. (From the Louterell Psalter.)

of those independent but helpless fractions of territory, neither French nor German, nor yet Italian, which lay at the mercy of warlike potentates. The kingdom of France was absorbing most of the fiefs of that region, so that, though the pope could feel safe from revolt or assassination, he very soon found that he had placed himself wholly in the power of the French king, who controlled all the roads and ports leading to Avignon and could easily cut off visitors, messengers and pilgrims, as well as money and supplies. The papal system was dependent upon the steady flow of its revenue from all over Europe—taxes on the prelates and clergy, alms (like the English Peter's pence) from the pious, fees for the recognition of appointments, and the purchase-money for dispensations, indulgences, lawsuits and licences. A poverty-stricken pope would be powerless; and Clement V practically put every post and every decision up for sale, a practice called by the indignant, *simony*.

The pope and the cardinals, therefore, felt it wise to obey the king of France, in return for safety and prosperity in their new home. But to the rest of the world the spectacle, described by every visitor, of the vicegerent of God at the orders of a cynical king was shocking. The authority of the pope had always been connected in some way with the imperial and sacred city of the emperors and SS. Peter and Paul, and this sojourn of the papal court in "the sinful city of Avignon," as the House of Commons publicly called it, was regarded as a crime against the Christian Church. It lasted for seventy years, despite all remonstrances (1308–1378), and was therefore in after years commonly termed "the Babylonish captivity" of the papacy. During the residence of the pope at Avignon, the direct action of Pope Clement V and of the cruel king of France, Philip the Fair, gave a fresh shock to the accepted standards of the European Church, by the violent suppression of the great Order of the Knights Templars and the confiscation of their property. The Order had existed for the defence of Jerusalem and had, certainly, been extraordinarily unsuccessful, in spite of the huge wealth with which the enthusiasm of crusaders, in an earlier age, had endowed it. The pope and the king of France coveted this wealth. It was true that the Order had outlived its purpose, but that would hardly seem to the medieval mind sufficient cause for breaking up a system sanctioned as a part of the Church. Pope and king, therefore, accused the Order of infidelity and of crimes of all kinds, and, by the most shameless travesty of justice (torturing the knights till some "confessed)" got them condemned as infidels and heretics and put to death. Their wealth enriched the pope and the secular sovereigns whose assistance the pope had to obtain.

In England, Edward II carried out the papal decrees, but without any great cruelty, and the lands of the old Order were given to the rival Order of St. John, the Hospitallers, whose scope was less restricted and who had been more popular, while they were poorer, than the haughty Templars.

This example of violent injustice and sweeping confiscation perpetrated upon churchmen by the pope himself could not but open the eyes of men to strange possibilities, and convince them at least of one new thought—that church property was transferable.

From the English point of view it was an outrageous thing that the pope should use his spiritual power to interfere at critical moments with their campaigns or embassies, so as to help the king of Scots or the king of France by intrigues disguised as peace proposals. But it was a still worse evil that the central Church authority should have become degraded into little more than a money-making machine.

From the recognition of bishops, or the preaching of a Crusade, to claims to a bequest of a few fields, no case was so good as to be settled without heavy fees and gifts, and few so bad as to be unable to win a decision by out-bribing the other side.

Such (in outline) had been for forty years the condition of religious life in England and in the supreme papal authority abroad, when the awful catastrophe of the Black Death swept away the greater part of the clergy of England and half emptied the monasteries.

The fearless self-sacrifice of the clergy left their flocks, over large districts, without any of the means of grace. In those days such a deprivation was universally believed to imperil terribly the unhappy soul left unblessed. The bishops did their best by proclaiming that every priest might exercise episcopal powers of absolution, and that laymen, or if need be, women should receive the last confession of the dying in the stead of priests. But when the plague was spent the churches were still silent; there was scarcely one priest where there had been four or five, and of the minor ranks of clergy few were left. Nor did enough candidates come forward for ordination: for the schools had also been emptied, while the sudden dearth of population and the consequent violent rise of wages left few to embrace a career in which the stipend, fixed at its old rate, meant starvation. The ranks of the clergy, therefore, were for many years very scanty and only supplied, even to that degree, by admitting to the priesthood young men who had not completed their education. Some could not read their service-books but had to learn by ear the more important parts; most were too ignorant to preach. Thankful as the parishioners would be to have the mass, baptisms, marriages and extreme unction for the dying once more celebrated among them, they could hardly give to a youth as ignorant of scripture as they were themselves the confidence formerly bestowed on their parish clergy.

Their discontent would be felt constantly, for the parish church was then the centre of village interests, being not only the house of the daily services but the place for all meetings, for school (if there was any), the spot where public notices were given, and all feasts and holidays begun. A careless or stupid parson was a perpetual grievance.

Even so, in order to provide a sufficient maintenance for a priest it was often necessary to give several livings to one man, while those who were willing to complete their education were given permission to study at a university, perhaps for years together, or to go to a town to take charge of several chantries, or to a castle as chaplain to rich persons who were determined that their souls should not be injured for lack of the mass, whatever might befall others. And thus absenteeism became very common.

This effect of the Black Death was a crying evil when, a generation later than Richard Rolle, another Yorkshireman, John Wyclif, was pursuing his studies at the University of Oxford. By 1360 Wyclif was Master of Balliol College, always the principal college of the north-countrymen, and was a man of so much mark that the university requested the pope (Urban V) to provide him with an English prebend, as an addition to his means, which was done.

Wyclif's influence was threefold. (1) He was early known among other intellectual men of Oxford, and on the continent, as a very learned doctor, pre-eminent in the arguments and commentaries which were still the regular methods of university teaching, and also as an exponent of the reforming principles of the great bishop of Lincoln, Grosseteste, and of a more recent chancellor of Oxford, Fitzralph (archbishop of Armagh).

(2) Because he was so eminent a man, Wyclif's views upon the relations of England to the popes became of great interest to parliament and the court, who treated him as a champion of the freedom of the English clergy and of parliament; this was a question of great importance towards the close of Edward's reign. His opposition to papal claims upon England led him to advocate certain sweeping reforms which had been written and spoken of before him, especially by Fitzralph, but never publicly adopted; in particular he maintained not only that the temporal wealth of the Church was the cause of her shortcomings—almost a commonplace with reformers—but declared that it was the duty of the State to remove this cause by taking away her property, and the duty of ecclesiastics to give up their positions as lords and State officials and to devote themselves solely to their Christian responsibilities.

(3) During the last part of his life Wyclif relinquished the attempt to reform the Church by producing a moral revolution among her chiefs, and devoted himself to evangelising the people by the teaching of Poor Priests, whom they nicknamed *Lollards*.

It was the second of his activities which produced the ferment in thought and action which has caused him to be named "the Morning Star of the Reformation."

The arbitrary papal appointments to English livings had, from early in the thirteenth century, been a frequent cause of complaint, and in 1307 the Parliament of Carlisle had asked Edward I to legislate against it. In 1343 Lords and Commons sent a solemn protest by a

baron of the Exchequer who faced the pope and cardinals at Avignon, spoke out plainly, and then rode for his life. The pope intimated his contempt for this country by his rudeness when the admirable and learned Bradwardine was presented to him as Archbishop of Canterbury: "If the king of England wishes to make an ass archbishop we must consent," he said; whereupon an ass was turned into the conclave with a petition for a bishopric hung round his neck. The Londoners retorted by exhibiting a set of mummers at Smithfield sports dressed as a pope and twelve cardinals. The Commons again and again urged the king to confiscate the property held by alien incumbents and abbeys, in order to apply the money to the defence of the realm.

At last Edward III gave way and sanctioned the *First Statute of Provisors* (1351), which forbade papal appointments (provisions) to be obeyed, and another, *Præmunire* (1353), which was meant to forbid any one to appeal to the pope.

But it was one thing to obtain the royal consent to a new statute and quite another to get it carried out. Papal procedure was little affected; among the royal ministers there were many clericals of the old-fashioned stamp, skilful in law and finance and expecting to be promoted to bishoprics in the usual way by the king and the pope. The most eminent of these was William of Wykeham, famous as a patron of learning and founder of colleges. His appointment to the See of Winchester was a breach of the new law of "Provisors" and a crying instance of what Wyclif and men of his principles complained of. Encouraged by finding the parliament helpless, two popes even claimed tribute, in 1365 and 1374, as feudal lords of England by John's surrender, with the result that in 1365 the parliament, and in 1375 a great council of prelates and lords called by the Black Prince, vigorously denied that the pope had any such supremacy. The poor archbishop tried to avoid saying anything, but a furious rebuke from the prince at last induced him to say: "I am of opinion that the pope is not lord here," and so said the other prelates after him.

During this long contest with the papacy, Wyclif (who may, very likely, have been a member of parliament) wrote a summary of the English arguments, copies of which were distributed both at home and abroad. This manner of appealing to public opinion about important questions had become usual and shows both that there was considerable public interest in such matters, and that men could read much more commonly than had previously been the case.

Wyclif's attack upon the papal claims probably caused John of Gaunt to try to enlist him as a helper in his own political schemes, which included an attack on Wykeham and other clerical ministers. It was a vain attempt, but it caused Gaunt to protect Wyclif at a moment when the papalist bishop of London, Courtney, tried to crush him by accusing him of heresy, now the usual charge made against any one who urged change or reform in the Church, and a

charge which was almost the same as condemnation, for the accusers were the judges.

The story is famous how Gaunt and Percy escorted Wyclif into St. Paul's, with four learned friars to help him to argue, and a troop of armed men to keep him safe. The cathedral was crowded with citizens, among whom Wyclif was far more popular than the haughty bishop.

Gaunt, on the other hand, was intensely unpopular, and the result of his open insults to the bishop was a furious quarrel between the troops and the crowd, from whom Gaunt and Percy had to flee for their lives. Wyclif remained silent and untouched. The Londoners were strong in his favour, the archbishop, Simon Sudbury, was unwilling to attack him, and the princess of Wales intimated her protection : clearly he was at this time (1370–80) the representative of what may be termed a national desire for reform in the Church and its independence of the papacy, two things extremely likely to go together.

Wyclif was not the man to pause in a process of thought. His investigation of papal claims very soon led him to further conclusions. Not only was the wealth of the Church contrary to Christian principle but the very claim of the pope to be the Head of the Church was unfounded. Wyclif had long been remarkable among his brother theologians for his intimate knowledge of the Bible which, in the Latin, was perfectly open to all who could read it, so that they had called him the *Doctor Evangelicus ;* but the principle he now laid down, that Authority and Tradition were less important than Scripture and should be tested by it, was one which the papacy had long since branded as heresy, for it involved a claim on the part of the man who put it forth to use his own reason, possibly against the authority of the popes. This the French Abélard had long ago claimed, but Abélard had been declared a heretic. "No custom in the Church, confirmed by popes or observed by saints, is to be praised, save in so far as Jesus Christ confirms it," said Wyclif.

This was a sweeping test before which much of the splendid edifice of the medieval church would have collapsed. It implied also that those who were to be active members of the Church must know the Gospel teaching. Wyclif's next steps, therefore, were to set on foot a translation of the whole Bible into English and to train a number of missionaries, the Poor Priests, to preach to the great mass of the people, who either could not read or could not have obtained any copy of the scriptures. The prevalence of superstition, such as the resort to miraculous shrines—both Thomas of Lancaster and King Edward II were declared to have worked miracles at their tombs—and the ignorance of so many of the clergy since the Black Death, caused Wyclif to lay extreme stress upon preaching, which he declared to be the prime duty of prelates and priests. In the end, he attacked the papacy, the prelates, monks, friars and the whole recognised system of church government and church property as

being a huge imposture, an anti-Christian edifice. He wished for a purely Gospel simplicity; the clergy should live on the offerings voluntarily given to them, without begging; whether they were married or not was of no importance; monks and friars, who supported the papal system, were obsolete and should be abolished together with the papacy itself. He attacked the papal doctrine of transubstantiation, a doctrine not set up until after Lanfranc's day, and one which had proved to be (in its crudest form) a great support to the clerical claim of spiritual absolutism. But this was a piece of philosophical reasoning, like many others of his opinions, such as the saying, made popular later, that "Dominion is founded in Grace." Briefly put, Wyclif's doctrine of "dominion" (*i. e.* authority) came to this: that spiritual power differs from worldly in that it cannot be reckoned by glory, or action, or such earthly standards: spiritual authority is derived from God, and a wicked man has not, therefore, got any true power; if a bad priest should excommunicate a good man the latter would not really be spiritually injured. But Wyclif's followers turned his theory, which they could hardly understand, into the doctrine that bad men ought not to hold office, just as they turned his subtle argument upon the Eucharist, which only university scholars could follow, into an irreverent attack upon the Holy Sacrament itself.

What had driven Wyclif into his last vehement attacks upon the papacy and its monetary system was a further papal scandal. The "Captivity" at Avignon had ended in 1377, and men hoped for some reform of the crying abuses in the Church, but next year two popes appeared, Urban VI at Rome and Clement VII at Avignon; and these rivals cursed and attacked each other and tried to collect money and troops, to use against each other, by the grossest means. An English bishop set out with an army against the Avignon pope, the archbishop offered prayers for his "crusade," and the friars travelled about to preach it and offered pardons for every sin if money were contributed to this horrible war.

Wyclif aimed at stirring public knowledge and opinion, not at acts of rebellion. He remained in his church and parsonage of Lutterworth training his Poor Priests. For a generation the Midlands were much moved by their preaching; from Leicester to Salisbury and from Bristol to Norwich there was much "Lollard" teaching, and in London a great many citizens were believed to hold their tenets.

No severe treatment befell Wyclif himself, who died in 1384. But his principal followers were attacked by the prelates, at the instigation of the pope, and declared to be heretics and outcasts from the Church. To the more eminent thinkers among them the condemnation seems to have been decisive. There was no thought, as yet, of separating from the universal body of the Church, but only of reforming. To be cut off from it brought a spiritual terror; they gave way, recanted as they were bidden, and lived out orthodox

and prosperous lives. A few, less distinguished as scholars but more thoroughly convinced, believed their own principles to be a part of the faith and, refusing to submit, were put to death. Lollard teaching, however, survived in a cruder form than Wyclif's actual teaching, and in most of the southern, western, and eastern counties congregations existed, which worshipped without images, refused to go on pilgrimages, and paid no obedience or taxes to papal agents. The more intellectual influence of Wyclif was exerted not in England, but in distant Bohemia.

Owing to the marriage of Richard II with Anne of Bohemia, students and travellers from that country found a welcome in England. At Oxford, and elsewhere, they found Wyclif's works, and carried back copies to their own home, where the theologian John Hus studied and adopted them. Hus and the whole of Bohemia—the Czech nation—became enthusiastically Wyclifite, and the condemnation and martyrdom of Hus at the International Church Council at Constance (1414) gave still greater publicity to his principles. The study of the works of Hus formed the critical turning-point in the careers of the German Luther and the Swiss Zwingli, so that there is truth enough in the famous saying of Fuller that, when the Council of Constance ordered Wyclif's bones to be burned and the ashes flung into the Lutterworth brook, "this Brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow Seas, they, into the main Ocean. And thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his Doctrine, which now, is dispersed all the world over."

XXXII

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

(iv) Piers Plowman's England and the Peasants' Rising

Just at the time when Chaucer was delighting the courtly classes by his tales, another poet was appealing to the mass of ordinary Englishmen to reform themselves, the Church and the government; and in the tremendous poem called *The Vision concerning Piers the Plowman* he held up a mirror of the national life and character.

The poem first appeared after the second pestilence (of 1361), and immediately became popular, for it was written in a style easy for the people to read or recite, and it described their own habits, sins and grievances and the tyranny, or greed, of their masters.

Not that the author (probably William Langland) wished to stir up revolts. He hoped that the nation would reform itself by practising a pure life according to Gospel teaching, a hope much like the last ideal of Wyclif, though the poet had no kindness for the Wyclifite priests.

But in 1377 a more bitter edition of "Piers Plowman" appeared, at a time when the death of the old king and the abuses of the government were exciting the nation fiercely.

The poem gives a relentless picture of the hypocrisy fostered by the superficiality of the Church, including the pilgrims who

> "Went forth on their way with many wise tales,
> And had leave to lie all their life after."

They visited Rome and Bethlehem, or St. James of Spain, but of *Truth* they learned nothing, nor dreamed of asking for it. There were the friars—

> "Preaching the people for profit of themselves,"

the parish priests, complaining that their parishes were poor, and asking leave to go to London—"for silver is sweet." Bishops and university men do the same:

> "Some serve the King and his silver tell,
> And some serve as servants to lords and ladies,
> And instead of stewards sit and judge the courts."

The roads are infested by robbers, but the worst of these are the lords with their *maintained* troopers from the wars. One carries off

the peasant's farm stock, borrows the best horse and never gives it back, breaks down the barn doors and carries off the corn. The great, the clever and the violent all seek but one thing—Money. Greed of money is the curse of the country.

The working classes seemed to the poet as bad as the great. Not avarice, but gluttony, laziness and levity were their sins.

They loved to linger in taverns listening to "Tales of Robin Hood and Randle, earl of Chester." When they got good wages they ate and drank of the best, hot pies and fresh cooked meat or fish, they disdained the bacon and vegetables of the countrymen. And then they waxed proud and cursed the king and his council, and lamented their hard fate to have been born to work at all.

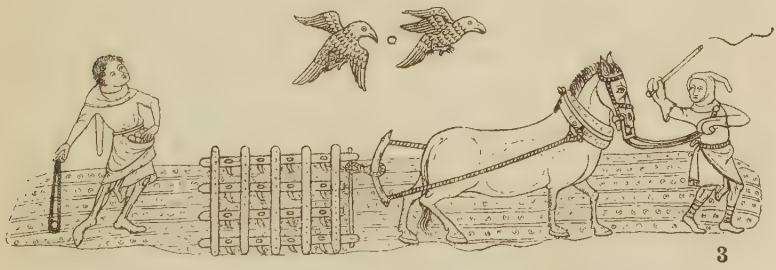
But there come hard times in the country, every spring, at any rate. "I have no penny to buy a pullet" (says Piers the Plowman), "neither geese nor fat porkers, nor a cockney (cook's lad) to dish up hot collops, nor even salt bacon:—cheese and oatcake, curds and cream, loaves of bran and beans, are the villein's fare, eked out with pease, cabbage, parsley or leeks, from his garden, and with baked apples or ripe cherries, according to the season.

The country-people were kept fast to their homes, by the tillage of the land, but they were not ignorant of the news of the day. The roads were always alive with travellers; friars and free labourers, minstrels and jugglers, pilgrims and beggars—"great loobies and long that loth were to work," wandered from tavern to tavern. The workman of one village might turn thief on his way to the next. Old soldiers from the dreary war in France brought their tales of cowardly lords and useless princes, and often enough turned robbers themselves. Merchants with their packhorses took wool to markets and ports, or went, well armed and in company, to a fair: carriers took the country produce to market: lords, bishops and abbots, with their trains of servants, and messengers of many kinds, journeyed from castle to castle, or abbey to abbey.

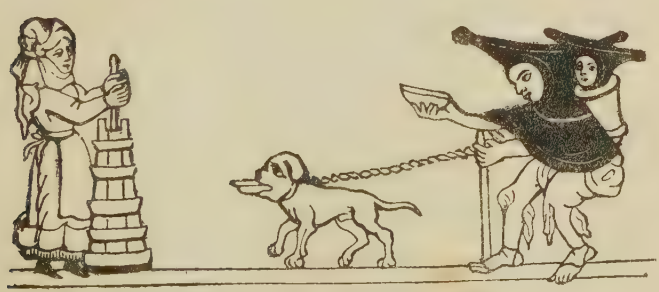
Of all forms of tale or sermon the English most loved an allegory, and the allegory of this great poem caught their attention. They seem to have quoted it to each other, along with rougher rhymes, in the bad years of 1377–81, understanding among themselves that things were so bad that they must be altered, and that the ministers and lords who kept the young King Richard from his people (as they believed) were so stupid that they could easily be overpowered by a resolute attack.

A certain John Ball, a travelling priest, preached for many years that the people ought to rise up against their oppressors; but no actual organisation existed which had prepared for a universal revolt. It was the government which finally exasperated the working classes into the Great Rising of June 1381.

The boy-king was now fourteen. But all power was still in the incompetent hands of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster. He was supported by a few very great nobles, by his younger brother



1. Ploughing. 2. Sowing. 3. Harrowing



Blind Beggar asking for Buttermilk.

Thomas (afterwards duke of Gloucester), by the insolent earl of Arundel, and others. They scorned any part in the government except leading costly armies on useless expeditions, but they shared the wealth of the land among themselves, and left the difficult task of ruling to a few ministers, of whom the chief were the Chancellor, Archbishop Sudbury, and the Treasurer, Sir John Hales, Prior of the Hospitallers. These two were, no doubt, well-meaning but not wise or strong enough to bring about the end of the real cause of England's sufferings—the long, unsuccessful war.

For over forty years the country had spent men and money in the vain effort to conquer the kingdom of France. Yet the nation would not hear of giving up the task. The taxes which were voted were not always fairly distributed, but fell more heavily on the poor than the wealthy. The poll-tax of 1380 was the last straw.

The parliament of Northampton which voted this poll-tax—the third in four years—ordered it to be collected in each town or parish as a unit. Each place must pay as many shillings as there were persons over fifteen. The rich were to pay more, so that the poorer might pay less, but no one should pay more than one pound or less than a groat (4*d.*).

Thus in a village where a lord or one or two franklins (free landowners) lived, the rest might get off with fourpence a head, while in a neighbouring place, inhabited only by artisans and peasants, each would be charged a shilling. As the tax-gatherers, however, had nothing to go by but the word of the inhabitants it was not difficult to cheat them, and when the whole collection was reckoned up it was found that only two-thirds of the sum paid in 1377 had been collected in 1380. The angry government hastily sent out commissioners to make inquiry, with orders not only to collect the balance due, but to fine the fraudulent villages. But the unlucky clerks had no means of enforcing these orders, and upon their first appearance in Essex and Kent the indignant populace fell upon them and beat them away.

The people had, in fact, got ready for resistance, and early in June 1381 all the counties near London were up in insurrection.

Two large bodies assembled, at Brentwood and at Maidstone. The former were principally bent upon obtaining from the king charters of freedom from villeinage, which was, in Essex, the condition of the majority. Kent was the richest and most populous county at this time; in it there was no villeinage, but it had suffered from French raids and was full of old soldiers. The rebels of Kent, therefore, made for the capital, to punish those whom they believed to be the traitors—John of Gaunt, the archbishop and Hales. On the way they freed from prison the famous preacher, John Ball, and chose an old soldier, Walter Tyler, to be their general. They entered Canterbury, to look for the archbishop, at the moment when the Essex army was making for Hales' home. The two ministers were in London, but their property was sacked

and their documents destroyed. On June 12, a fortnight after the first beginning of the revolt, the Essex army was in Mile End fields and Tyler's on Blackheath, and not one step to protect the capital or the king or themselves had been taken by the ministers. Their chief, John of Gaunt, who was in the north when the rising began, fled to Scotland and was treated with hospitality, though the two countries were at war.

All they could think of was to shut themselves up in the Tower with a guard of a few hundred soldiers. The Mayor, Walworth, closed the gates and the bridge, but the aldermen were afraid to call out the city troops (some thousands of trained men) lest the discontented lower classes should rise in sympathy with the rebels.

The latter had adopted as their watchword "King Richard and the true Commons," and they begged that the king would come to hear their petition. Richard was anxious to do so, but at first the nobles with him would only take him in a boat down the river towards Greenwich, a bit of procrastination which dangerously irritated the multitude who had rushed down to the banks in hopes of telling the king their wishes. But their loyalty was perfect, not an arrow was shot; Richard's mother, the princess, had already been in their power, with her little band of attendants, but they had sent her on her way unharmed.

Tyler now marched through Southwark to attack London; two treacherous aldermen opened the gates of the bridge (London's one defence on the south) while at the same time Aldgate was opened to the Essex men. Thus easily in possession of London, the rebels methodically set about their work.

Different parties undertook the punishment of the "traitors." The archbishop's palace of Lambeth, John of Gaunt's, the magnificent Savoy, and the Hospitallers' great house at Clerkenwell were all destroyed. Others attacked the Temple, the college of the lawyers, and destroyed all the documents; the inhabitants had fled. A few lawyers, servants of John of Gaunt, and agents of the government were beheaded, and their houses pulled down—an easy task, when built of wood, and a frequent punishment of those days.

More important was the throng around the Tower. The Mayor wanted to fight them but the nobles refused, and the result was a practical surrender. Richard promised to meet Tyler's army in the fields at Mile End, intending the Chancellor and Treasurer to escape in the meantime by the river. But when the king had set out, a party of the Kent men broke in, unresisted, ransacked the place, found the archbishop and Hales, and carried them off to Tower Hill where they were executed.

In the meantime Richard was in the midst of the armed multitude at Mile End. His grown-up half-brothers had slunk away and galloped to safety, but the boy-king listened patiently to the petitions of the rebels and granted them. Villeinage and feudal customs were to be abolished, land should be held at fourpence the acre, instead of

services, and the rebels should all have pardons. Clerks were found to write down the royal promises at once on scraps of parchment, one for each village, and as each group received its precious charter the men of Essex went away homewards.

But Tyler's army was unsatisfied still and at length broke into pillage and drunkenness, and a second time the young king, single-handed, faced the armed mob, this time at Smithfield, and saved the situation.

The tale is famous. Tyler, perhaps from sheer insolence, committed the criminal act of drawing his dagger before the king, the mayor and a footman of Richard's struck him down, then, in the pause of consternation, while arrows were being pointed, Richard spurred forward before the crowd, crying: "Sirs, will you shoot your king? I will be your chief and captain; you shall have from me that which you seek. Follow me to the fields without." And he slowly rode before the peasants into the Clerkenwell fields, only a few of his retinue daring to follow him. The rest of his lords and guards, supposing all now to be lost, went off to save themselves, while the mayor galloped back to the City to collect what soldiers he could to rescue the king. For nearly an hour Richard was almost alone with the "True Commons," and true they proved. No hurt was offered to him, and when Walworth with a number of armed Londoners arrived Richard forbade them to fall upon the trusting mob. "I will not let the innocent suffer with the guilty," he said; the men of Essex and Herts were now already on their way home, the men from Kent the king formed up in a column and bade them march home over London Bridge, following two knights, whom he ordered to lead them. This the crowd obediently did, London was emptied of its invaders before nightfall, and the gallant lad knighted the mayor before he rode home to his terrified mother (June 15).

The news of the sudden end of the attack on London spread rapidly to the other places where insurrection was in progress and damped the spirits of the rebels. Of these, the most important district was that of the eastern counties—Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Bedfordshire—where the revolted peasantry had combined with the artisans of the large villages and with the workmen in the towns to attack their local oppressors. In Norwich, Lynn, Ipswich, and Yarmouth, the governing classes were attacked; in St. Albans, Bury St. Edmunds, Dunstable, Peterborough, Luton and Ely, the monks; at Cambridge, the university. Everywhere they showed their hatred of the Law and its documents. "Away with the learning of the clerks, away with it!" an old crone kept crying, as the whole of the library and the records of the university were flung into a bonfire at Cambridge.

In the counties there was more slaughter than in London, but with a clear purpose. Lawyers, tax collectors, and jurors accustomed to serving on the inquests met with death, and so did the officers of the tyrannical abbeys and the tools of John of Gaunt.

Norwich was entirely cowed, Yarmouth suffered mostly from its neighbours, Beccles and Lowestoft, which had been injured by the special harbour and market privileges of the younger, but larger, port. Huntingdon alone found the courage to close its bridge to the mob, which was then so much dismayed by the death of two of its leaders that it retreated.

The gentry showed the same paralysis everywhere: their castles and manor-houses were ransacked for documents; they hid, from the earl of Suffolk to the squires of Kent, in the woods or rode headlong to the midlands. The rising was at last subdued, almost single-handed, by the warlike bishop of Norwich, Despenser. Clad in armour he led his household troops and a very few Norfolk squires at full charge on the rebel camp, broke through their barricade, and at close quarters cut down the ill-armed crowd who were helpless against trained men in armour. So the rising in East Anglia was quenched in blood.

In other places the rising seems to have been spasmodic, and chiefly among the artisans in towns. Bridgwater, Scarborough and the Wirral of Cheshire appear to have been the furthest points affected, but the midlands were quiet.

The vengeance taken afterwards by the ruling classes was, on the whole, less severe than might be expected. Even of the actual leaders caught, by no means all were executed. Commissioners with sufficient troops were sent round the revolted districts—Kent with the Surrey villages; Sussex, where the small towns had risen against their lords, and the eastern counties. But in many places, and among them Beverley, Scarborough and York, it was hard to find what class, or what persons had been most in fault, and the Crown was satisfied by levying a heavy fine, thus punishing alike the cowardly authorities and the revolted workmen.

The people gained little or nothing from their great effort, except that a wholesome fear may henceforth have worked in their masters. The customs of commuting labour tasks for payments and of letting lands to farm continued steadily, but the extinction of villeinage by these slow processes took about a century. The destruction of the manor rolls probably was a help, for it became difficult to prove ancestry, and during the fifteenth century families could rise to wealth and lordship whose enemies liked to accuse them of villein origin but could not prove it.

A more immediate result was the change of popular feeling to the king. Richard was as ready to revoke his promises as parliament was to declare them void. To modern ideas he had certainly no power to free villeins, but according to medieval thinking this was by no means so clear. He himself, however, took the first opportunity of supervising the punishments, and at Waltham announced to the people that villeins they were and villeins they should remain.

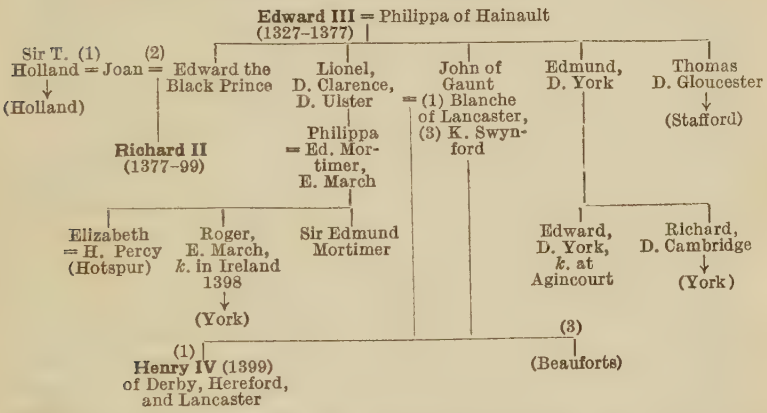
This marked the end of the people's belief in their king; henceforth they ascribed the national misfortunes to him, and the latest version

of *Piers Plowman* (reversing the process of Wyclif) is more occupied with politics and with the scandals of the court than with purely religious allegory. The people (says the poet) is eaten out of house and home by rats, and there is but one remedy—a cat. The cat will be a tyrant, but that can be endured if only she will make an end of the rats, but—

"Where the cat is a kitten, the court is full ailing."

XXXIII

THE CROWN AND THE BARONS: (3) RICHARD II (1377–1399)



THE Great Rising had been a sudden interruption in the feuds of the magnates and in the lingering war. In Flanders we lost our alliance with the democratic leader of Ghent, Philip van Artevelde, by his failure and destruction. At home, the rivalries of the royal princes and other factions began again at once.

The over-greatness of the house of Lancaster not only by itself endangered the stability of the Crown, but set a fatal example to other great families, as the Mortimers and Despensers had shown in the gloomy reign of Edward II.

Edward III had diverted the energies of the nobles to the French war for a long period, but with the French recovery, the baronage began again to seek a field at home for the arrogance and greed of themselves and their followers, nor had foreign warfare softened their manners or increased their respect for justice. The ambition displayed by Earl Thomas of Lancaster had slept during the lives of his brother Earl Henry, and of the splendid Duke Henry, but in John of Gaunt, who, with the hand of Blanche, acquired the whole Lancaster inheritance, it revived, and became even more dangerous. By making his sons great lords Edward III had not

subdued the baronage to the Crown, but had introduced feudal rivalries into the royal family.

Hitherto England had been signally free from the curse of so many other countries—disputed successions to the Crown, but the deposition of Richard II caused a really feudal war which lasted for a century, till Bosworth, and in the end destroyed the medieval monarchy and the feudal class together.

Richard's three uncles were John, duke of Lancaster, Edward, duke of York, and Thomas, duke of Gloucester (to give them the titles they soon assumed), but their quarrel with the king was waged by the help of other great nobles, chiefly of the west and north. The Marches, Welsh or Scottish, afforded dangerous scope for independence, since the Crown was obliged to allow powers of justice and the command of large bodies of troops to the lords charged with defending the borders, and their castles were nests of violence.

The leaders of the opposition to the Crown were, Gaunt till 1381, and then his youngest brother, Gloucester, who held great fiefs in the west and had the control of Cheshire. Lancashire (in Gaunt's possession) and Cheshire were *palatinè* counties, *i. e.* the respective earls exercised there the powers which the king had elsewhere. Under the two princes these counties became lawless lands where brigandage and murder raged unchecked, and the refuge of free-booters who did not confine themselves to the two counties.

Gloucester's principal supporters were the earls of Arundel and Warwick, both magnates of the first rank, holding fiefs on the Welsh Marches. The latter was the head of the Beauchamps, who very rarely turned against their sovereign; the former held castles in Surrey and Sussex (Reigate, Arundel, Lewes), and in Shropshire and Cheshire, and was enormously wealthy. His father, doubtless from the plunder of France, had left him over 40,000 marks of money stacked in bags in Arundel Castle, and as much more elsewhere.

Of the northern lords, Percy and Mowbray, who supported Lancaster, the Mowbrays held the Isle of Axholme, important as the junction of the great north and south route which crossed the mouth of the Trent, as well as estates in Leicestershire, and had raised themselves to the front rank by a marriage with the heiress of Norfolk. The head of this family was won over to Gaunt's party by being made earl of Nottingham. The Mowbrays had always been conspicuous by activity in rebellions.

The Percies had for generations been valued servants of the Crown as captains, justices and wardens of the Scottish March. Their original fiefs lay in Yorkshire, round Topcliffe, but royal gratitude had made them still greater lords in Northumberland, Alnwick being their greatest stronghold. Gaunt had purchased their adherence with the earldom of Northumberland. Their support of John of Gaunt was a reason for the less powerful Yorkshire families of Scrope and Neville to support Richard II.

John of Gaunt, however, learned so much wisdom from the Great Rising as to understand, that it would be safer to cease his interference with the government, and he devoted himself to the will-o'-the-wisp adventure of claiming a crown in Spain. He carried thither, and totally wasted, a fine fleet and army, and a great treasure voted by parliament (1386), but his absence was, apparently, worth purchasing at any price.

Richard's next uncle, Edmund, duke of York, engaged in a similar gamble in Portugal, and thus Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, was left at home, where he took up an attitude of severity and censure towards the young king and was suspected of aiming at his deposition and at seizing the crown himself. The royal dukes gave colour to such a belief by preventing the recognition of any heir to Richard from 1377–1386, in spite of parliamentary requests. Only when Gaunt was in Spain was the lineal heir publicly acknowledged.

This was Roger Mortimer, earl of March, a boy rather younger than Richard, and grandson of Lionel of Clarence. Richard was now nineteen, and had, ever since the Great Rising, been treated by Parliament, and officially, as actual king, while his uncles and the great lords treated him as a child. They had taken advantage of the rising to dismiss the governor named for him by the Black Prince, Sir Simon Burley, and place him under the earl of Arundel, together with a painstaking but low-born minister, Michael de la Pole, son of the merchant of Hull. The latter became the young king's devoted servant and friend, the earl, his bitterest enemy. But Gloucester and Arundel and Warwick went further in 1386. They attacked Richard with violent abuse, declaring that the extravagance of his court caused all the ills of the kingdom, and accusing him of cowardice because he refused to prosecute the hopeless war with France.

Richard's principal friends, besides De la Pole and Burley, both elderly and experienced men, were the archbishop of York (a Neville), Sir Nicolas Bramber, mayor of London, and the young earl of Oxford, De Vere, one of the most eminent of the nobility. Richard had, in fact, lavished all he could upon this friend, being vehement in all his feelings, and extremely generous. He had made De Vere marquis of Dublin and duke of Ireland, and intended him to begin a thorough conquest and government of Ireland, where, rather than in France, he had the wisdom to see the right field of English expansion. The king also reckoned upon his cousin Henry of Bolingbroke, earl of Derby (Gaunt's son), and the young John Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, as friends, and was embittered when he learned that they had both been won over by Gloucester. The result was a trial of strength in parliament, where the Gloucester faction demanded, and obtained, a commission of eleven to take the kingdom out of the king's hands for a year and "reform the kingdom and the royal household" (1386).

Richard sent for the judges and asked whether this arbitrary proceeding (which set aside parliamentary ministers as well as the sovereign) was legal. Chief Justice Tressilian and the rest, some because they were of the king's party, some because they expected that he would otherwise punish them, declared that it was not legal, and therefore the five lords (Gloucester, Arundel, Warwick, Nottingham, Derby), took up arms (1387). Richard and the earl of Oxford were less well prepared, and Oxford, on his way to succour the king at Windsor, fell into a trap at Radcot Bridge. Arundel suggested an armistice and used it to inform De Vere's troops that he was a rebel, whereupon they dispersed and Oxford could only save himself by flight.

The five lords and the bishop of Ely (Arundel's brother) marched triumphantly to London, where they called a parliament, known as the Merciless (1388), and as they accused (or appealed) Richard's friends of treason—an absurd charge—the five lords got the name of the Appellants.

Oxford, De la Pole and Archbishop Neville had fled to Flanders, but the Appellants seized and executed Burley, Tressilian, Bramber and several others, and exiled all the judges to Ireland. The king and his adored wife, Anne of Bohemia, whose goodness and charity won her much love, strove to save the life of Burley, who had lived with them much as a foster-father, and even knelt at Arundel's feet, only to be insolently repulsed.

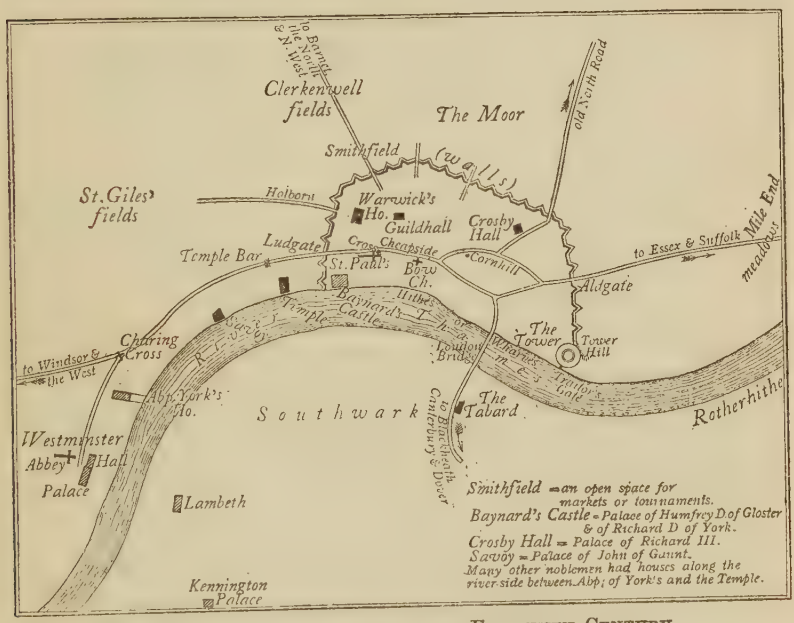
For more than a year Richard had to submit. Then disagreements among the lords themselves gave him an opportunity of asserting himself, and taking the reins of authority again, for he was now twenty-two (1389).

He dared not venture on recalling his three friends, who within three or four years all died, but he had now brought Derby and Nottingham to his side, and was ably supported by one member of the great nobility, the earl of Salisbury, and for some years he made semblance of having forgotten or forgiven the Appellants, while he was quietly constructing a party to support him. He even allowed Bishop Arundel to become archbishop of Canterbury.

During these eight years parliament met as usual and carried through some really efficient legislation against papal interference by the three great statutes of *Provisors* (1390), *Mortmain* (1391), and *Præmunire* (1393). By the first, papal appointments to benefices were made void, and the Crown empowered to fill them; the second forbade gifts of land to the Church without royal licence, always paid for; and the third punished any who should carry lawsuits to Rome by the forfeiture of their whole property to the Crown. Only with royal permission, therefore, could a pope interfere in England, and it was now to the royal interest to watch against encroachment. These laws practically made the sovereign the master of the dignitaries of the Church. But when the parliament of 1395 showed an intention of attacking the abuses within the English Church itself,

Richard was persuaded by the bishops to put a stop to the movement. It is remarkable that Richard's legislation included (1) an attempt to provide for helpless beggars, by charity in their old homes, and (2) an attempt to secure a good mercantile marine (Navigation Act), both of which were, long afterwards, famous parts of Tudor policy.

In the meantime Gaunt had come home, a disappointed old man, and the king thought he had secured the goodwill of his uncle and cousin by creating the latter duke of Hereford—his wife was a



SKETCH MAP OF LONDON IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Bohun heiress—and by decreeing that Gaunt's illegitimate sons, the Beauforts, should be held legitimate. He gave to the elder the earldom of Somerset, and to the younger (afterwards famous as Cardinal Beaufort) the bishopric of Lincoln. Nottingham and the Percies also, were lavishly gifted with lands and honours. The real work of government was entrusted to Salisbury, to the experienced Lord Scrope, and to three knights—Bushey, Bagot and Greene. At the same time Richard was imitating the nobility by enlisting retainers, conferring pensions upon them and a *badge* to show whose followers they were: such men were said to be *of the livery* of their lord. Richard's badge was a White Hart which he gave profusely to all manner of adherents, lords, gentry and yeomen;

it is still to be seen as the sign of many an old inn which was once a hostelry depending on some lord of Richard's party.

In 1397 Richard struck suddenly. He had followed the example set by Gaunt in 1377 and by the Appellants in 1388, and carefully "packed" the parliament, that is, secured many members in the Commons who would be obedient to his wishes. It could be done by trickery on the sheriff's part, or by threats or bribes among the governing bodies in the towns. Lancaster, Derby, Nottingham, the earl of Northumberland and his brother, were ready to help, and the Speaker of the Commons was Richard's devoted servant, Bushey. Arundel, Gloucester and Warwick were suddenly arrested and accused; the archbishop received a hint to fly and wisely did so. Arundel engaged in a violent quarrel with Lancaster and Derby, Gloucester made an abject confession, but Warwick saved his life by turning renegade and "confessing" to the king the treasons of Gloucester.

Richard would hear no intercession for Arundel; his record was one of incompetence and insolence; like his father, he had always lost his troops by land, and his ships by sea, and his castles were left undefended; to his default was due the ravaging of Sussex by the French and the loss of two strong fortresses abroad; he had not only been one of the virtual murderers of Richard's friends, but he had insulted Queen Anne, in life, and at her funeral had ostentatiously signified his contempt. He is said to have been popular in London, but the villagers and townsmen of Sussex hated him and had sacked his castles in 1381. Arundel was beheaded, Warwick sent to prison for life in the Isle of Man, which was given to the Percies, but when Gloucester was called for to stand his trial, the duke "could not be produced because he was dead," replied Nottingham, in whose charge he had been placed. Every one believed that he had been murdered.

Richard was now for a few months supreme and displayed to the whole realm his method of arbitrary rule at the four days' Parliament at Shrewsbury (January, 1398), where, surrounded by the king's Cheshire archers, the terrified Commons voted taxes for the king's life, and both Houses deputed their authority to a small Committee, whom Richard made pretence of consulting, during the next year, in order to obtain their formal ratification of all his acts.

Richard now flung prudence to the winds. Everywhere his men of the White Hart flaunted their insolence: towns and wealthy men were obliged to "lend" the king money, called by him his "plesaunce," but otherwise *forced loans*. Men were accused of treason by expert fighters and bidden to fight out the quarrel, in order to induce them to pay heavy bribes; and entire counties were threatened with being put outside the law, to secure fines. The invention of blank "promises to pay," signed by the victims of extortion and left for the royal officers to fill in, seemed the climax of despotism.

Until the death of Gloucester there was little to suggest that the nation (by which must be understood the lesser lords and squires, the mercantile classes, the franklins and prosperous peasantry and the parochial clergy) had taken any great interest in the feuds of the great. But Gloucester had known how to make himself popular, and the common rumour ran that Nottingham had murdered the duke at the king's order, and that the king had farmed out to his financial ministers, Bushey, Bagot and Greene, the realm of England. Songs of political significance became rife, calling for sympathy for the dead lords and suggesting that the king was responsible for all ills. Nottingham was rewarded by being made duke of Norfolk, while a number of courtiers in whom Richard thought he could trust, were made lords; the Hollands (his half-brother and nephew) got peerages, besides several other young men. A Scrope earl of Wiltshire, a Neville earl of Westmoreland, and a Percy earl of Worcester seemed to promise more solid support.

Richard's actions were, of course, all unconstitutional. Their importance seems to be that the king was trying a new method of safeguarding the Crown. For the actions of Gaunt, in the early part of the reign, and of Gloucester and the Appellants, later, had threatened the liberties of the nation at least as much as the king's arbitrary acts. Both reduced parliament to a mere registering body.

The principal weakness in Richard's position was his lack of supporters. His abler ministers and personal friends had been destroyed. Salisbury and Scrope were sole survivors of the former, and Salisbury was unpopular as a protector of Lollards and the maker of the French truce. Worse still, the king's heir and friend, the earl of March, had just been slain in a skirmish in Ireland (July, 1397), and his infant son, now the legal heir to the Crown, could be but a slight obstacle to the ambition of Hereford.

Moreover, Richard accumulated unpopularity by his wiser acts as by his rash ones, and by his openness as well as by his dissimulation. He had persisted in making a truce with France, preparatory to a peace; and the whole nation, though unable, it seemed, to win one battle, and unwilling to provide any supplies, cried shame on him. Gloucester had constantly used this cry against his nephew, who only in 1396 succeeded in making a twenty-five years' truce, and took the little Princess Isabella as his second wife. Nor did Richard's just and wise policy towards Ireland win him credit in England.

To establish a real government in that island by extending a friendly royal authority seemed to Richard a better ambition than that of conquering invincible France. "To us and to our council," said Richard, "it appears that the Irish rebels have rebelled in consequence of the injustices and grievances practised towards them." Twice he went thither himself, and with considerable success began to create a personal connection with the Irish chiefs, and twice he was dragged back to England; in 1395 by Archbishop

Arundel, who insisted that the suppression of anti-clerical legislation was of prime consequence, and again by his cousin's invasion in 1399. A quarrel between the two great nobles still left produced Richard's ruin.

The Shrewsbury parliament had just thankfully dispersed when the two survivors of the Appellants, mutually suspicious, fell out. Hereford hurried to the king, supported by his father, to accuse Norfolk of disloyalty, and Richard, who had been more embittered by Mowbray's early treachery (since he had reckoned him as a friend) than by Henry of Derby's, believed that he could use the quarrel to punish both. To the amazement and excitement, not only of Englishmen, but of foreign potentates, he decreed that these two great lords should, in chivalrous style, fight out their feud before a great concourse at Coventry. It seemed like a deliberate arrangement for civil war. Richard, feeling secure of his troops, had simply set a great scene such as he loved, to exhibit his own supremacy.

The costly and formal proceedings (described by Shakespeare, following the chronicles) were at the last moment interrupted by the king, who threw down his staff, to stop the onset, and announced that both dukes must go into exile, to preserve the peace of the country. But Norfolk was banished for life; Hereford was given to understand that his exile should be but brief, a concession to the appearance of justice. Hereford could by this time estimate Richard's justice tolerably well, and he departed, prepared to draw together the threads of a conspiracy which should revenge everything upon the king's head and secure the kingdom, at last, to the line of Lancaster.

His father, John of Gaunt, however, did not live to see this final achievement of his old ambitions, but died next year, whereupon Richard, in shameless breach of his promises, seized the whole of the enormous Lancaster fiefs and intimated that Hereford might remain for ever banished. He then, with extravagant foolhardiness, betook himself to Ireland on his second expedition (1399). He carried with him Hereford's son and several other young nobles, as if hostages, but he left behind him a nobility aware that no promise bound the king and that no appearances could be trusted, and a commonalty wrought up by old resentment and every kind of rumour to ripeness for revolt.

Richard's last actions left Hereford no choice but to attempt a revolution. In all likelihood he had already prepared for this. Abroad there was already the revengeful Archbishop Arundel, of whom men said afterwards that it was "his working that unwrought King Richard from his crown." He had emissaries at home who reported to him the instability of Richard's party, composed of the unpopular, selfish Hollands, the vacillating Rutland, York's son, now created duke of Albemarle (or Aumerle), a mere title, and the greedy Percies, ready to join a new side for new

rewards. Hereford had become popular in London (apparently by means such as Shakespeare describes), and the duke of York, left as regent by Richard, was an inert time-server, only anxious to avoid responsibility. He would be loyal to whichever of his nephews was successful.

Hereford landed at the mouth of the Humber, saying that he had come only as duke of Lancaster to claim his inheritance, and to reform and amend whatever in the realm was amiss. "And what for love, and what for fear of loss, they came flocking to him from every side." Northumberland gave his support and made a bargain for the entire treasure of King Richard. The Nevilles also made their bargain and remained quiet. Richard hurried over from Ireland, but landed, not as he had intended, at Bristol, but in Wales, and found himself without troops at Conway Castle, while Scrope and the other ministers had hurried to Bristol, where they were seized by the citizens and their heads smitten off.

Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, who was with the king, scattered his small following by suddenly breaking his staff of office, as if the king were dead, and crying: "The king will no longer hold household!" "And anon all the king's menie forsook him and left him alone. Then cursed the king the untruth of England and said, 'Alas, what trust is in this false world!'"

In vain did the faithful Salisbury try to collect followers, for "however large wages he offered he got no men," and then came the treacherous Northumberland, and persuaded Richard to leave the castle with him, when he led him straight into the host of Henry.

Archbishop Arundel overwhelmed Richard with violent reproaches and accusations, and the king gave way at once. He surrendered to Henry and offered to resign, hoping to be spared by his cousin's clemency, as he had spared Henry's young son, his hostage. But he was conveyed a prisoner to London and placed in the Tower, while York, as regent, obligingly saved the forms of constitutional government by calling a parliament, which sat for one day, September 29, 1399.

Richard announced his resignation in dramatic terms, he had "sinned against God and the realm," and he absolved all men from allegiance. But the archbishop, as spokesman of the parliament, declared that the nation accepted this resignation because he was worthy of deposition, and read a list of his illegal deeds. The whole scene emphasised the right of the nation, exercised through parliament, to depose an unworthy king and to select from the royal family the man most fit to fill his place.

XXXIV

THE CROWN AND THE BARONS: (4) HENRY IV (1399–1413)

Henry IV . Sept. 1399
Henry V . Mar. 1413
Henry VI . Sept. 1422

THE Percies had played the greater part in placing Henry of Bolingbroke on the throne, but the permanence of the change was due to the common consent of all classes of the nation. That the procedure was parliamentary proves that the barons had finally given up the idea of doing without parliament; even Richard had recognised the necessity of parliaments by his parliamentary committee. The fifteenth century is not without reason sometimes called "the century of the Commons," and in externals it exhibits an almost perfect constitutional practice. All the powers of supreme control, over taxation, laws, foreign policy and royal councillors, were conceded to it, the sole thing lacking was the art to put the powers which it in principle possessed into actual practice, and this want of connection between theory and practice became more and more glaring as the century went on.

Henry's difficulties lay chiefly with the barons. A desperate rising of Richard's recent friends in 1400, when they discovered that penalties rather than bribes awaited them, resulted in their discomfiture and execution, and in the death of Richard in Pontefract Castle, where he was probably starved to death.

In 1403 came Henry's settlement with the Percies. The enormous estates which they now held made them practically independent in the north and also on the borders of Wales, and a marriage connection with the Mortimers led to a combined attack on the new king by these two families and a Welsh chief, whom they were both supposed to be keeping in order. The sister of the dead earl of March had married Henry Percy the younger, "Hotspur," and though March's young son was safe in Henry's hands, an uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, ruled in his name the Mortimer fiefs on the march. The two brothers-in-law had an understanding with Owen Glendower, the ambitious Welsh chieftain, who thought he saw an opportunity for restoring Welsh independence, and, who, indeed, was never more than nominally defeated by the efforts of the English king.

The Percies were aware that the huge price they had extorted from Henry IV had rendered him actually poor; Parliament had been dismayed to learn that of Richard's accumulated treasure nothing remained, and the earl of Northumberland, who had for some time endeavoured to conquer in the Lowlands of Scotland for his own hand, and his son, who had for a short time made war on Glendower at his own expense, aimed at reducing the king to their own terms or dethroning him. They would have placed the crown on the head of young Mortimer and secured entire independence in the north for themselves; Glendower was to help in this disruption of the kingdom and create an independent Wales. Glendower thereupon "carried off" Sir Edmund Mortimer, while Hotspur went to pick the quarrel with the king. He demanded the ransom of his brother-in-law and more sums of money to repay his own expenses. "I have no money, ne none that thou shalt have," replied Henry. Percy burst into loud abuse: "Thou spoilest the realm with taxes and tallages, thou payest no man, thou holdest no Household, thou art not the heir of the realm, and as I have hurt the realm by bringing in of thee, I will help to reform it." Then the king drew to him his dagger, and Sir Henry Percy said to the king: "Not here, but in the field." Fortunately for Henry IV mutual suspicion kept the different feudal houses from combining heartily. Glendower never fulfilled his bargain, Northumberland would not move till he did, and Hotspur was caught, unsupported, by the king, and defeated and slain at the battle of Shrewsbury, 1403.

There followed other revolts: in 1405 Archbishop Scrope, of York, and Mowbray, son of the duke of Norfolk (who had died in exile), attempted to avenge their family wrongs, but failed and were both executed. In 1408 Northumberland again tried a rising, but was slain in fight on Bramham Moor.

More dangerous to both Crown and nation was the renewal of war by France and Scotland, with the useful help of Glendower, whom Henry IV was never able to reach and who made alliance, as an independent prince, with the French king. Charles VI naturally considered that, as Richard's truce expired with him, it was well to weaken Richard's usurping successor as much as possible. While Henry, year after year, expended his resources bootlessly among the Welsh mountains, and totally neglected the fleet, the French ravaged the coasts, the Channel Isles and Wight, burnt Portsmouth and raided the Thames mouth. Henry himself was nearly seized as he was crossing from Queenborough to the opposite Essex coast. Though he was convoyed by ships of war, only the speed of his own vessel saved him, and four ships, with his attendants and baggage, were carried off prizes to France. The only naval exploit on the English side was the capture in that same year, 1406, in northern waters of a Scottish ship bearing the heir to the Scottish throne to France, where he was to be educated. Henry IV, with the

jest that he could himself talk French as well as any man, kept the young prince in honourable confinement, well provided with tutors and amusements, as a permanent hostage. His old father, Robert III, sank under the blow, and Henry could feel certain that while he held the young king of Scots, now James I, and left Scotland to the quarrels of its own nobles, England was safe from attack on that side.

With regard to France, there was the eternal difficulty of money in the way of a war. Henry's parliaments were indignant to find that the new sober-sided monarch wanted money grants as often

The French Knight and the Author of the Metrical History of Richard II. (From a Manuscript in the British Museum. Court Costume, *c.* 1400.)

as the extravagant Richard. Henry had sons and half-brothers, and the Beauforts were soon taxed with avarice as great as that of any of Richard's ministers; but whereas the latter had at least accumulated treasure for national purposes, the Beauforts, like the Percies, Nevilles, and other great lords, expected to keep for their own behoof the revenues and lands bestowed on them, and to be repaid a second time, from the national purse, their expenses at Calais or on the Marches. This conflicted with the feudal principle, according to which lords held lands on the precise condition of fighting. But it had been found to work so ill that from the twelfth century kings had relied on mercenaries, and, when these, in the thirteenth century, were discarded, the sovereigns had

enlisted native soldiers for pay by commissions of array. But the custom of keeping on foot large bodies of retainers, marked by the lord's *badge* and livery, though forbidden by Richard II, was triumphantly practised by the nobles. They had permanent troops who could laugh at any judge or sheriff, while, if they used them for national purposes, the Crown would pay their master, on the Edwardian plan. The result was a succession of private wars which seemed almost to repeat the anarchy of Stephen, before which king and people were equally helpless.

Parliament could devise nothing but fresh statutes against *livery*, and also against an ominous use of these liveried retainers by the nobles, commonly called *maintenance*.

Every nobleman had partisans among the gentry and other classes: every nobleman had feuds on his hands. If anyone of his connection had a dispute or a law-suit with some neighbour of another lord's connection it was to the credit of either lord to decide that dispute or law-suit in favour of his own man. Hence many violent actions occurred. Retainers would attack a squire or a farmer or even the vicar, or the village peasants, and beat them to compliance; they would assault jurymen or sheriff's officers who tried to do their duty; they set houses on fire, broke down walls, carried off crops, interrupted law-courts, set prisoners free, put markets or fairs to ransom, waylaid the judges, and fought out their quarrels with each other, not, as a rule, in open fight, but by assassination and terrorism. Three times did Henry IV's parliaments prohibit keeping retainers, but the law was a dead letter.

With similar ineffectiveness the Commons devoted much attention to keeping down expenses by voting only small sums at a time, and by obtaining from the Crown permission to audit the treasurer's accounts, to originate money grants without interference from the Lords, to require changes of ministers and other "*constitutional*" privileges. But in spite of such parliamentary juggling the persistent inadequacy of the revenue to cover the royal and national expenses was never remedied, the navy ceased to exist, and the country grew more lawless at home as it became more defenceless from its enemies.

Fortunately for England, the kingdom of France had fallen an even more helpless prey to faction. King Charles VI, of feeble health and married to a Bavarian wife of odious character, was liable to fits of insanity. His children were too young to rule, and the rival factions of the two greatest nobles, the duke of Burgundy and the duke of Orleans (with the count of Armagnac behind him) tore the unhappy realm to pieces. Henry was relieved from fear of war only to find jealous parties in his own court. Few as the royal family and the noble class had become through their own dissensions they still must quarrel. The king's young sons and his ambitious Beaufort brothers resented the supremacy of Archbishop

Arundel in the royal counsels, and their rivalry gave Henry little peace till his death in 1413.

This powerful position of Archbishop Arundel, both among the nobility and the clergy, is a main reason for the ecclesiastical policy of Henry IV and Henry V. He was conciliated in every possible way. The menace which the parliaments, from 1376, had several times offered of depriving the Church of some part of its vast wealth, had by no means disappeared. Twice the Commons desired Henry IV to replenish the treasury by confiscating the property of alien or of non-resident incumbents and prelates. This was a practical form of Lollardy, and to defeat it Henry had sanctioned an Act of Parliament of a character hitherto happily unknown in England, known as *De Hæretico Comburendo* (1401), (*of the burning of heretics*) which permitted bishops to arrest, fine and hand over to the sheriff, to be burned to death, any "heretic." From this date "heresy" became an offence against the law of England, and the prelates could call on the officers of the law to inflict the death penalty which ecclesiastical courts alone could not have inflicted.

XXXV

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR RENEWED, 1415–1453

Henry V . 1413
Henry VI . 1422

HENRY V has been, from his own youth to present times, one of the heroes of English story, and in his own lifetime he was hailed as the hero of his age by the most eminent men of Europe, and the general voice of the peoples. He was the most powerful and most honoured English sovereign between the Conqueror and Queen Elizabeth. Yet his short reign of nine years brought about the eventual downfall of his own House and the serious retarding of English progress on almost every path, and this by the very means which he deliberately chose to make his House and England safe and great—the reopening of the war with France. From the modern point of view it is difficult to find excuse for this wanton war of conquest. Edward III had far more justification, in the state of national enmity which then existed, in his just claims on Aquitaine, and in his own not unreasonable claim, as that age considered it, to the French crown.

Henry V was beset by none of these questions, and the lords and knights of England actually showed a distinctly peaceful tendency when he first consulted them on the matter; not they, but he, insisted on the reopening of the war, and this although the French government offered the highest terms to attempt to satisfy him—the whole of Aquitaine and Poitou and the hand of the Princess Catherine with an enormous dowry in gold.

Henry, indeed, was a man of his own times with no further vision. His character of capacity and energy, his pure and upright life, his generosity to the deserving, and his swift severity to those who offended him, his devoutness and correct orthodoxy, and above all his military success, won for him the applause of his contemporaries. War seemed almost the obvious field for a young, ambitious prince, and Henry considered the distracted state of France and the loyalty of England—plainly indicated both by parliament and the people—most favourable conditions for war. From his accession he prepared for the attack on France, and ordered the building of ships and guns and provision of stone cannon-balls

and gunpowder. His ambassadors to France asked for the hand of Catherine, daughter of Charles VI, or the recognition of Henry's right to the throne; he would allow Charles to remain king for his life but must be accepted as heir.

While French ambassadors made frantic efforts to avoid the coming storm, Henry tried to allay old feuds at home. He had the corpse of Richard II royally interred in Westminster Abbey beside Queen Anne, and he restored to their honours and fortunes the heirs of Mowbray, Percy, Scrope, Holland and Mortimer. The last, the young Edmund, earl of March, became loyally attached to the king as, apparently, was the young duke of York (formerly Rutland), yet he or his family still cherished rancour.

With the masterful Archbishop Arundel, Henry V had never been on good terms, and he now deprived him of that control of policy which he had enjoyed under Henry IV. But the king's orthodoxy left to Arundel full opportunity to persecute heretics, and he began with an eminent man, the king's friend, Sir John Oldcastle, and, partly in consequence of this fresh alliance of State and Church against freedom of thought and criticism, a great gathering of Lollards was arranged in St. Giles' fields outside London. It was believed to be a Lollard plot for a rising against the king, though it may have been simply a demonstration; certainly Oldcastle was involved, but the worst that is really known of him is that he refused to "recant" his religious opinions at the archbishop's bidding, and that he fled to Wales before he could be put to death. This demonstration (1414) marks the end of the open attacks of the Lollards upon the political power of the ecclesiastics. From 1376 to 1414 they had urged, sometimes in parliament, a partial disendowment of the Church for national purposes. Neither Richard II nor Henry IV had listened to them, and now that such views were condemned as heretical, they became too dangerous to be worth discussing.

But the opening of the war revealed another and more alarming conspiracy. Though the earl of March relinquished the claim of his house to succeed Richard II, a claim both hereditary and parliamentary, since parliament had formally recognised it in 1385, it was to be asserted, in spite of him, by his uncle Richard, earl of Cambridge, brother of the duke of York, and husband of Anne Mortimer, who was sister to the Edmund Mortimer of Percy and Glendower's rebellion. This Richard, earl of Cambridge, was a man of selfish and contemptible character, whose conspiracy for dethroning the line of Lancaster included, apparently, the assassination of Henry V. He had induced some others to join him, but the earl of March, to whom they had to explain their plans, promptly warned the king, who was at Southampton (1415), superintending the embarking of his army. The conspirators were arrested and after a nominal trial by their peers were beheaded, among them being Lord Scrope, a trusted minister, who, however,

A Sea-fight in the Fifteenth Century.

From *The Life and Acts of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.*

declared that he had plotted no evil but only had not, like March, betrayed the others to the king.

So great indignation was expressed over this plot, that Henry was convinced of the loyalty of the kingdom and proceeded on his way to France.

Henry's invasions of France were planned on the method of attacking her on her strongest side till he could compel her to accept his terms. This strongest side was Normandy, and an advance through Normandy threatened Paris, now the heart of the French monarchy. But so determined was the French resistance that it took Henry five years to force the government to a peace, and even then his success was due to the feud between the two French parties.

(*a*) The war began in 1415 with a landing at the mouth of the Seine; the siege and hard-won capture of Harfleur, followed by a destructive sickness among the English army; the march towards Calais and the blocking of the way by the French army; the brilliant victory of Agincourt and the return of Henry amid the rejoicings of Kent and London and all England.

(*b*) From 1416 to 1418 difficult, persistent progress was made in Normandy by the slow process of besieging town after town. During these years Henry continued to negotiate with the two French parties, the Armagnac, or Dauphin's party, and the duke of Burgundy, hoping that one or other would join him. He intimated to the Armagnacs that he was ready to give up his claim to the crown of France if he could obtain the Flanders possessions of the duke of Burgundy instead. In the meantime his famous siege of Rouen (1418–19) exhibited to France and the world his mastery of the latest scientific methods of war.

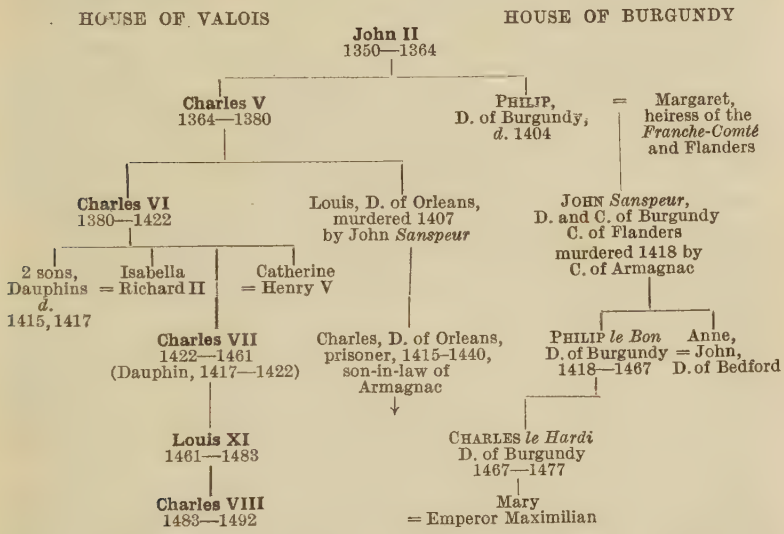
(*c*) But in 1418 the French internal quarrel came to a head, the murder of Burgundy flung his party into Henry's arms, and with their help he was able to obtain, by the Treaty of Troyes, 1420, the concession of his demand to be accepted as heir of Charles VI and regent during his life, with the hand of Catherine.

(*d*) As the Dauphin's party still maintained its apparently hopeless resistance, the years 1421–2 were spent in further fighting, Henry drawing steadily nearer to Paris, when he fell suddenly ill, after the capture of Meaux, and died.

A letter from one of the English soldiers, probably stopped by the censor of those days, indicates that the army was aware that success was not wholly assured. The writer says of the French ambassadors of 1420 that "in old manner of speech in England they be double and false" and had made a cipher of Henry by their diplomacy. The war was one of hardships and dreariness. "Pray for me," he ends, "that I may soon come out of this unlusty soldier's life into the life of England."

The position of the French parties which had made possible

the temporary English triumph can be best understood by the following table :—



John, duke of Burgundy, was master, not only of French Burgundy (the duchy), but through his mother, of the region called the County of Burgundy, or *Franche Comté* which, being nominally a part of Empire and by no means a part of France, made him an independent sovereign. The same descent made him count of Flanders and in consequence, wealthy. When the Armagnac party contrived to assassinate him in revenge for his assassination of Louis of Orleans, his son Philip, who was even less of a French prince than John, pledged himself to Henry V to secure a thorough revenge. Thus England was once more in alliance with her old friends of Flanders against the same enemy, the French House of Valois. As the young duke of Orleans was a captive in England from 1415 till 1440, the Dauphin Charles had few supporters, except the discredited count of Armagnac, a very great, but cruel and perfidious lord in the south of France. Neither the count nor the Dauphin had been able to attach the Parisians to their cause, Burgundy had been the citizens' favourite. The alliance with Duke Philip (the Good-natured) became henceforth the key of the English position in France.

Henry's military successes had been due partly to his own warlike talents, partly to the skill and fortitude and physical strength of English archers and men-at-arms, and partly to the forethought, most remarkable in those days, with which the king had beforehand provided his troops with every kind of necessaries; not only with

siege implements such as guns and gun-stones, catapults and scaling ladders, but with leather pontoons, ovens for baking bread, extra horses and weapons, and even some doctors for the wounded. His treatment of the captured towns was considered to be magnanimous, for he usually accorded terms when they surrendered, and never permitted a sack. As he marched slowly through Normandy he paid, at great expense to England, for the food of his men, an almost unheard-of piece of generosity, because he wanted to conciliate the people. He made excellent offers to any gentry who would join him, and at once obtained the rare reputation of strictly keeping his word, yet, in spite of all his offers and of the Dauphin's frank warning that he was unable to fight for them, so strong was the national feeling of the French people that scarcely a town yielded except to force. Henry's expectations had been totally disappointed.

He died in 1422 at a critical moment. The poor, mad king of France knew nothing of what concerned his kingdom, the principal thing connected with him is playing cards, which were invented, or introduced into France from the East, for his amusement. He died shortly after Henry V, and the infant Henry VI, born at Windsor, was thus left heir to two kingdoms.

The death of their adored king was not allowed by the English to hinder their efforts to accomplish the task he had begun. The long minority of Henry VI is remarkable for the tenacity with which lords and commons continued the war, and for the splendid loyalty of the man on whom principally fell the burden of the two realms, John, duke of Bedford, the next brother of Henry V. There was no suggestion of any setting aside of the infant sovereign, who, indeed, was expected to be accepted by the French as heir, through his mother Catherine, of the Valois line.

Of the other members of the royal family, Thomas, duke of Clarence, had fallen in battle the year before Henry V's death. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, the youngest brother, was the evil genius of his House, and his selfish efforts for his own aggrandisement, regardless of the national interests, first hindered the war, and then plunged the government in England into a turmoil which prepared the way for the civil wars of the Roses. Of the Beauforts, only one was of importance, Bishop Henry, afterwards Cardinal Beaufort. He had been the trusted counsellor of Henry V and continued to be a powerful, and usually a wise member of the council which now directed the government. But he was unpopular, his character was totally secular, and although he was wealthy he was considered ungenerous. He frequently financed the government in its difficulties, but he always secured profitable repayment. He steadily opposed the duke of Gloucester, but the latter, spendthrift and showy, possessed the arts of popularity and rejoiced to stir up the Londoners against his uncle. "The Good Duke Humphrey" was their title for this mischief-maker.

Bedford became Regent of France and Protector of England, but during his almost permanent absence in France, Gloucester enjoyed the delegated powers of Protector. The marriages contracted by the two princes in 1423 were characteristic; Bedford married the sister of the duke of Burgundy, in order to draw closer the all-important alliance; Gloucester married Jacqueline of Hainault, the claimant of a principality imbedded in Burgundy's realm, and did his best to assert her pretensions and to offend the duke.

A new development of the Scottish-French alliance led the English government to set free the Scottish king James I, in hopes of making with him a firm peace (1424).

The Scottish nobles cared little for the interests of their captive monarch, left in England since 1405. And as the Regent of Scotland, James' uncle, the duke of Albany, had an understanding with England which forbade raiding across the Border, adventurous Scotsmen crossed to France and took service there. It was Scottish troops which had defeated and slain Clarence at Beaugé (1421), and though in a return battle at Verneuil (1423) they were themselves badly beaten, the connection was sufficiently alarming to make the ministers see that the rule of a friendly king in Scotland was desirable.

James I had been carefully educated in England. He was a man of genius and energy, and returned to his kingdom determined to control its wild nobility and to educate his people into a civilisation like that of England. He had fallen in love with an English princess, Joan Beaufort, niece of the Cardinal, and before his return home he wedded her and undertook to keep his country at peace with England.

Up to 1428 the war went on with the advantage on the English-Burgundian side. Charles VII was not yet crowned, and had retired from Paris to Bourges, so that all the north of France was controlled by Bedford and his ally. In 1428 an advance was made, to drive the Dauphin towards the English southern base of Guienne, and Orleans was besieged. Its fall might possibly have decided the war—for a time at all events, and the best English commanders, the earl of Salisbury and the famous Sir John Talbot, did their best. One of the subordinate commanders, Sir John Fastolfe, is more famous in literature than he was in actual war, for his name was used by Shakespeare, and his civilian career is on record in *The Paston Letters*. It was during this siege that he fought the notorious "Battle of Herrings" or Patay, as to which it is still disputed whether he was either a brave or a wise commander (1429).

At this juncture occurred the amazing event which saved, first Orleans, then France, the appearance of Jeanne Darc (or Joan of Arc), the second patriot saint—St. Louis being the first—to whom the French nation has given birth. So astonishing was her character and career that while the French with reason saw in it a miracle, the English of that age may be excused for their belief that the famous Maid of Orleans was a witch. Their confidence in the

merits of their cause was, at all events, not sufficient to overcome their dread after her first and greatest feat. This was the defeat of the English outside Orleans, the raising of the siege, and the coronation of Charles VII in the sacred cathedral of Rheims, the ancient crowning-place of all French sovereigns.

In vain Bedford tried to recover the loss of prestige by sending for the boy-king Henry—only lately crowned king of England in 1429—to be crowned in Paris. The sight of the English child-king crowned by Cardinal Beaufort in Notre Dame (1431) must have seemed more of a threat than a promise. And although in the same year the Burgundians defeated and captured the heroic Maid, this was the result of treachery among Charles' followers rather than of courage on the part of the invaders.

A prisoner of war could not (in medieval times) be put to death: but the English were determined to end the spells of "the witch" by her execution. The distracted condition of France is made evident by the desertion of the Maid by those for whom she had wrought a miracle. The newly crowned Charles did nothing; the university of Paris and the chiefs of the papal inquisition alike demanded her surrender to them as a heretic to be punished. The solution was simple. The archbishop of Rheims and the English clergy united in preaching against her as an emissary of the devil, and Cardinal Beaufort purchased the captive from the Burgundians for the huge sum of £10,000. It was easy to have her tried as a heretic and to condemn and execute her in Rouen; now after such long ages once more the capital of an English king-duke of Normandy.

The Maid was burned at the stake: "We are lost, we have burned a saint," muttered an English soldier. Certainly the French successes continued and the tolerance, and in some places popularity, which had been won in northern France by English justice and firm control vanished again. The duke of Burgundy had begun to wish for the end of so long a war, Charles VII had begun to show the skill in negotiation which made him remarkable, when, in 1432, Burgundy's sister, the duchess of Bedford, died, and an important link was severed. Bedford's second marriage with a young princess of the house of St. Pol, powerful on the northern borders of France and Flanders, actually offended Burgundy.

He agreed, therefore, with Charles VII to exert himself for a peace, and a great Congress was held at Arras in 1435. All Europe was anxious by this time for a peace. The emperor and the pope sent envoys to the Congress, and excellent terms were offered. If the English would relinquish the claim to the French crown, they should have in independent sovereignty the two duchies of Guienne and Normandy. To the surprise of most of the envoys Bedford rejected the terms.

Burgundy, considering that he had done enough for his allies, made a very profitable treaty himself with Charles VII (Treaty of Arras) and withdrew from his alliance with England. A few days

later Bedford died at Rouen and the loss of the English conquests in France became simply a matter of time.

Jealousies within the Council, and greed among the English nobles weakened the resistance offered to the joint French and Burgundian attack. The young duke of York, Richard (Henry's heir, after the childless duke of Gloucester), and the elderly duke of Somerset, John Beaufort, who insisted upon wielding the command in France in turns, showed little skill or energy except in their endless quarrels, and were both insatiably avaricious. Bedford had been laid in his grave but a few months when the French recovered Paris and the Burgundians attacked Calais, though not successfully. Normandy and Guienne went back, piecemeal, to their national sovereign, and in 1440 the English council began to make efforts for peace.

It was over late, for delay was now advantageous to France, but the duke of Gloucester stirred up the popular rage against the "traitors" who wished to end a losing war, just as the former duke of Gloucester had done in Richard's time. The duke of Orleans was released without ransom and restored to France in the somewhat visionary hope that out of "gratitude" he would make a profitable peace for us. But the war dragged on; our armies wasted away while the coffers of their generals and captains grew full, and in 1445 the earl of Suffolk, William De la Pole—much like his ancester in Richard's time—resolved to face unpopularity and make peace. It was more easy to desire than to achieve, for the French king was winning his way and was resolved to make no concessions. In stupid hopefulness Suffolk next proposed a royal marriage to pave the way. The French king's only marriageable relative was his distant cousin Margaret, the beautiful daughter of the titular "King" René (of Naples and Jerusalem), whose county of Anjou had long been in English possession. Suffolk could not succeed in drawing up any definite treaty with the French government, but he believed that he had secured their goodwill by bestowing a handsome sum of money on the penniless René and making the portionless Margaret queen of England, in return for a mere truce.

Such diplomacy not unnaturally gave opportunity for fierce quarrels; when, in 1447, both Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort died, the renewed rivalry between Richard of York and the new duke of Somerset (Edmund Beaufort) resulted in the evacuation of Anjou and Maine (1448), in the plundering of Brittany by disorganised English troops, in the renewal of the French attacks (1449) and the loss of all France except a few seaports in Normandy. Two years later even the faithful Gascony coast from Bordeaux to Bayonne was lost, for sheer lack of attention, and in 1453, the last fighting general, Talbot, was defeated and slain in the last battle of the war, at Chatillon. Calais alone remained for a century longer an English outpost, and the nation was left, discredited in its own eyes and those of other nations, to face the results of forty years of unsuccessful war and extravagant expenditure.

XXXVI

THE CROWN AND THE BARONS: (5) 1450–1485

Edward IV . Mar. 1461
Edward V . Ap. 1483
Richard III . June 1483 to Aug. 1485

THE WARS OF THE ROSES

IN 1451 the last outposts of English rule in France vanished. In 1450 the insurrection of Jack Cade had begun the thirty-five years of civil war which weakened England politically, and retarded her progress in every other sphere. It is possible to trace the causes of these misfortunes further back, in fact they sprang partly from the renewal of the Hundred Years' War by Henry V, partly out of the baronial and royal blood feuds which dated from the treacherous murder of Gaveston by Thomas of Lancaster.

If, at the time, a French war appeared to Henry V a prompt mode of securing the loyalty of the nobles and had, for a few years, bestowed tranquillity on England by removing the turbulent classes to France, the rapidity with which quarrels broke out after the death of Henry V showed that war was not necessarily a bond of union at home.

Henry V had made a will in which he assigned different spheres to the princes of his family, whose jealousies he must have known. Parliament, however, tenacious of its constitutional powers, declared that his will was invalid: no king could bequeath the government of the country, which inhered in parliament; but it adopted most of Henry's programme, made Bedford protector of the whole realm, with control of the war, and named a council (the Privy Council) which was to do the actual work of government, while the duke of Gloucester was allowed to act as Bedford's deputy during his absence in France.

The bishop of Winchester, made a cardinal by the pope, was immeasurably superior to the duke as statesman, but the quarrels of their retainers became so alarming that the parliament of 1426 was called to Leicester and the members forbidden to bear weapons; so they armed themselves with clubs and it got the name of the Parliament of Bats. Only Beaufort's position as an ecclesiastical magnate enabled him to face Gloucester, for the latter seemed

likely enough to be king in the end, Bedford being childless and little Henry VI very delicate.

The costliness of the war was an ever-increasing difficulty. Taxation was unpopular, rich though the nation was as a whole. In 1433 Bedford reduced his own salary and his brother's, the bishops served unpaid, and Cardinal Beaufort lent enormous sums. Two years later Bedford's death and Burgundy's withdrawal made it clear that further success could not be hoped, and the cardinal wished to negotiate a peace. Hereupon Gloucester made the most violent attacks upon him and his friend and colleague Archbishop Kemp, and so fiercely excited the passions of the Londoners that the opportunity for peace was lost (1440). In 1442 Henry VI came of age and encouraged his minister, Suffolk, who was of the Beaufort party, to negotiate a truce (1444) and a French marriage for himself with Margaret of Anjou. So fierce was the opposition of Duke Humphrey that the royal safety necessitated his arrest, but when, after a fit of passionate rage, he was found to be dead, the people naturally enough supposed him to have been murdered by Suffolk.

Henry VI is, perhaps, the one saint who has sat upon the English throne. His gentle, selfless, devout temper, his pure life, his love of peace, and readiness to forgive wrongs done to himself, make him a character remarkable at any era, but especially in the selfish fifteenth century. His tutor had been that famous warrior Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, but Henry proved by no means warlike. The earl had procured special authority from the Council to beat his royal pupil, if necessary, according to the savage code of education then usual (though not universal), but Henry showed no ill-will to his preceptor, and his dearest friend was the earl's son, Henry Beauchamp, whom he made duke of Warwick, and on whom he heaped every favour in his power. Had he lived, this young duke would have been Henry VI's all-powerful minister, but he died young, and his great possessions fell to his brother-in-law, Richard Neville (the king-maker).

Henry VI was also a learned and intellectual prince, gifted with much artistic taste. He loved to collect books, and to plan beautiful buildings. The famous chapel of King's College was begun by him. He found one of his principal pleasures in founding the famous school at Eton, which he watched over himself, and the Cambridge foundations of King's and Queens' Colleges.

These tastes were not surprising, for this was one of several eras in European history when Italy, by her triumphs in art and letters, was drawing the intellectual youth of other lands to study in her brilliant courts and cities. Venice, Milan, Florence and Rome were only some of the centres of inspiration, where Raphael and other great artists were at work, and where Latin and Greek were being taught by great scholars.

Another English patron of learning was Humphrey, duke of

Gloucester, by whom the famous library of Oxford University was first founded.

The death of Gloucester (1447) left Richard, duke of York, the king's heir, until the birth of Prince Edward in 1453. By descent, he was already the heir not only of the line of York but of Mortimer as well, and though he was personally of an insignificant character, and extremely rapacious, his marriage with Cecily Neville had made him the tool of the boldest politicians of the time, the family of Neville, another of the great northern families who have swayed the destinies of England. They were rivals of the Percies and secured some of their spoils, and to satisfy their demands the valuable wardship of young Richard had been given to Ralph Neville, earl of Westmoreland, who had married him to his daughter. The duke of York, his brother-in-law, Richard Neville, the new earl of Salisbury, and Salisbury's son, Richard Neville, the king-maker earl of Warwick, controlled between them a very large part of the feudal estates of England, and the duke of York drew also enormous revenues from the national purse. He refused to act in any capacity in the government without a great salary, or to become the figure-head in Normandy or Ireland except with royal powers. The payment of his extravagant salaries and those of other nobles—the Beauforts were quite as grasping—formed a dangerous drain on the national and royal resources, and the poverty of the king and queen became a scandal, imputed to every cause but the true one. Once on Twelfth Night, when, by an ancient custom, their majesties should entertain the Court, it was impossible to hold the feast because the unpaid purveyors would no longer provide food. The unlucky judges complained in 1451 that their salaries had been unpaid for fourteen years.

As Queen Margaret beheld in the duke of York a personal enemy she naturally strove to place power in the hands of either the loyal Suffolk or the Beauforts. The male representative of this line, after the cardinal's death, was his youngest nephew, Edmund, duke of Somerset, but the eldest nephew had left a daughter who was a great heiress in her own right and regarded by many as the nearest heiress of the king, and Henry VI caused her to be married to his half-brother, Edmund Tudor. The Lady Margaret Beaufort (or Tudor) was a cultivated scholar, and a patroness of learning gratefully revered to this day in Oxford and Cambridge; but the male Beauforts were neither wise nor popular, and Suffolk had to bear, almost unsupported, the odium of the attempts to make peace, and of the loss of France. He had attempted to secure partisans by the usual methods of *livery* and *maintenance*, and his supporters, sure of government favour in the law-courts and of royal pardons if need be, appear to have been the most lawless of all the nobility. The queen, and with her the king, was therefore identified with the bad conditions at home, which created as much discontent as the unsuccessful war abroad.

Cardinal Beaufort.

In some counties civil war was a normal condition; the Bonvilles and Courtenays kept Devon and Dorset in a turmoil for thirteen years, in the course of which Exeter cathedral was plundered. In Lincolnshire and its borders Lord Cromwell and Lord Beaumont waylaid and murdered each other's partisans on the high roads and in the markets; in Yorkshire, Percies and Nevilles fought a pitched battle at Stamford Bridge (1453). In commercial Norfolk, as in woodland Shropshire, gentlemen were shot from behind hedges or dragged out of their homes in the night to be hanged or stabbed. Any one bold enough to seize the property of his neighbour found it easy to hire a band of ruffians; more cautious persons would get up a false charge and have the victim kept in prison till jurors or judge had been bullied into promising a false verdict.

In 1450, the Yorkist majority in the Commons proceeded to impeach Suffolk (*i. e.* accuse him to the Lords of high treason), and requested a State trial. At the same season a widespread insurrection broke out. The sailors of Portsmouth and the adjacent havens mutinied and murdered the minister, Bishop Moleyns of

Chichester, who had been sent to cut down their pay, which was long in arrear. The men of Sussex and Kent also assembled, in orderly array, as if for war, the men of each hundred under its proper constable, and they compelled several abbots and gentlemen to march with them under the "Captain of Kent," a soldier who called himself Sir John Mortimer, whom the peasants termed John Amend-all, but who has always been known as Jack Cade.

While this massed army was advancing on London, Suffolk had been sacrificed. He had thrown himself on the royal mercy, aware that a trial before the Houses was a foregone conclusion, and, to save his life, had been banished by Henry. But the royal ships were under the command of York's partisans and put out to sea to intercept him. His ship was stopped and he was brutally murdered (May 1450). Cade entered London triumphantly, whence the royal family had fled, and, seizing the new treasurer, Lord Say, cut off his head and that of the sheriff of Kent. As soon as the news reached the west, the people of Wiltshire rose and murdered another minister, the bishop of Salisbury.

But the army of Cade began to plunder London and put citizens to death, and shortly the City rose against them, supported by the troops of one or two military men who had the resolution to fight. Cade's men killed the leaders, but withdrew over London Bridge, which they burned behind them, and when his men dispersed with their plunder, Cade was without difficulty seized and slain.

The dukes of York and Somerset had been in their respective vice-royalties of Ireland and Normandy. Their hurried return only made civil war a better organised affair than Cade's mob-rising.

York was in close agreement with Salisbury and Warwick, and heartily supported by London. The Cinque Ports, the sailors and the fleet were enthusiastic for Warwick. The Mowbrays and Bourchiers (connected by marriage with Neville and the late duke of Gloucester) kept Norfolk and Essex on the same side, which was supported by nearly all the trading interest, that is, by the towns of southern and eastern England, from the Humber to the Severn estuary.

The Lancastrian party had, however, a nook of refuge in Coventry, Kenilworth, and the neighbourhood, and the wealthy districts of Somerset and Devon were no strongholds of Yorkist lords. But the principal royal supporters were the smaller feudal lords of the north. The houses of Dacre, Clifford, Vescy, Beaumont, Grey and their friends, were afraid of the great Neville coalition; Talbot, Stafford and Vere were by tradition loyal to the Crown; Percy was, of course, Lancastrian, in opposition to Neville. The majority of the peers, in fact, supported the Crown, but the main power and wealth lay on the other side. "It is for the south against the north," a Norfolk gentleman reminded a wavering friend.

After three years of armed meetings and attempted arrests the illness of Henry VI, who fell into a mental and physical stupor which

lasted for more than a year, caused York to be named Protector (1454). Parliament dared do no otherwise, for York had seized the Speaker of the Commons, a Lancastrian, and kept him in prison, while his first act as Protector was to imprison Somerset. But the birth of an heir to Henry, Edward, prince of Wales, was the decisive event. When Henry VI recovered and resumed his royal powers, York and his friends were dismissed and Somerset reinstated. The result was the armed meeting at St. Albans, 1455, where the slaughter of the Lancastrian lords, Somerset, Clifford, Northumberland and Stafford added a blood feud to existing rivalries.

Victory lay first with one side, then the other, till 1461. Once the king procured a temporary reconciliation (1458), and led the principal rivals to St. Paul's to make friends, the deadliest foes going hand-in-hand, the queen with York, and Salisbury with young duke of Somerset. The mayor, Boleyn, had anxious months while London was filled with their armed retainers, but the truce held and York felt constrained to swear solemnly his loyalty to the king. He was, however, preparing to fight and summoned his adherents to Ludlow, the capital of his Mortimer possessions (1459). Margaret sent to "arrest" Salisbury on his way thither from Yorkshire, but her Cheshire troops were badly beaten, at Blore Heath, though at Ludlow York's best captains deserted to the king, and the leaders fled without an effort, York to Ireland, the others to Calais. A Lancastrian parliament met in triumph at Coventry, and endorsed the queen's measures of revenge—the condemnation of all the Yorkist lords by an act of parliament, called an Act of *Attainder*. It was voted (without any form of trial) that the persons named were guilty of treason and therefore *tainted* in blood, *i. e.* they must suffer death, if caught, and all their possessions were confiscated to the Crown, instead of descending to the heirs. The lands were then promptly distributed among the victorious party.

The Yorkist lords reinstated themselves by a sudden attack. Salisbury and Warwick with Edward, the duke of York's eldest son, called the earl of March, landed with troops and marched straight to the king's refuge in Northampton (1460). Treachery now set the other way, and in half-an-hour the loyal nobles (Buckingham, Shrewsbury and Beaumont) were slain and the king a prisoner in Warwick's hands. The victors took Henry to London, where York joined them and a Yorkist parliament accepted him as Henry's heir, setting aside Prince Edward.

Margaret, however, with the prince, had fled to Scotland, while Cliffords, Percies and Dacres gathered so large a force that York and Salisbury went to Yorkshire only to find themselves outnumbered and outgeneralled. In a fight by Wakefield, York was slain and Salisbury taken and at once beheaded. Clifford met the returning queen with "Madam, your war is done, here is your king's ransom," showing her York's head—and they marched southwards, the northern men plundering on the way. Warwick moved from London

to St. Albans to intercept her, and placed Henry VI in the midst of the battle, that he might be likely to meet his death. The Yorkists were, however, beaten, and the king saved, but learning that Edward, now duke of York, was close to London with victorious troops from Wales, and uncertain of the discipline of her own troops, who wished to plunder London, Margaret hesitated too long, and then withdrew to the north. Edward entered the capital amid the joy of the Londoners who hailed him as their king.

Edward accepted the acclamation and was at once crowned by Archbishop Neville, of York, in March 1461. The two parties were evidently very nearly balanced, and Edward, who had a real talent for war, set out quickly in pursuit of the Lancastrians, caught them, that same month, on the moor between Sawston and Towton and fought them in a snowstorm. He succeeded in placing his men with their backs to the gale, so that their arrows flew farther than those of the other side, and won a complete victory which secured to him the Crown, although there was fighting in the north for three years longer.

Margaret had purchased Scottish help by surrendering Roxburgh and Berwick, and there Henry VI found for some time a kind refuge, while his indefatigable wife tried to obtain help in France.

Neither French nor Scottish assistance added to her popularity, and Edward IV could appear as the national champion, and took pains to re-knit the ancient alliance with Flanders, as against France. His sister Margaret was married to Charles "the Bold," who became duke of Burgundy in 1467. As Flanders had for some time been a part of the Burgundian dominions the name Burgundy now replaces that of Flanders, but the situation was the same as in Edwardian times.

Louis XI, the astute king of France (1461–83), was by no means disposed to support a failing cause, and if Edward IV and Warwick could have continued in union, nothing, probably, would have disturbed the Yorkist dynasty, which seemed to be firmly secured by its merciless destruction of the leading men of the opposite party. After every battle the notable prisoners were executed, and every obedient parliament ratified the executions by voting attainders, which enriched the victors.

There was, however, ill-feeling between the new king and Warwick. Like other king-makers the latter never felt sufficiently rewarded or sufficiently safe. Edward IV was young, impatient and arbitrary, indisposed to be a mere tool of the Nevilles. He deliberately offended the great earl by marrying secretly the beautiful widow of the Lancastrian lord Grey, Elizabeth Woodville, very nobly born but of no account in high politics, whereas Warwick had designed for his royal cousin some alliance of European importance, preferably with a French princess, to ensure peace from Queen Margaret's activities.

Edward promoted his wife's numerous relatives by wealthy

marriages, in order to create a party attached to himself, with the result that his next brother, the earl of Clarence, took as much offence as Warwick and joined him in intrigues either to coerce Edward, or to drive him from the throne. They instigated local risings in 1469 and 1470 (in the north under a Conyers, "Robin of Redesdale," and in Lincolnshire under Lord Welles), but without much success. The vain and fickle Clarence, who hoped to become his elder brother's heir, married one of Warwick's daughters, in order to secure her vast inheritance, and when the risings failed, was obliged to fly with him to France. They next offered their help to Louis XI, who adroitly seized this opportunity of paralysing England as an ally of Charles of Burgundy, and contrived to reconcile Queen Margaret with Warwick, hitherto her most remorseless enemy.

The result was Warwick's invasion and triumphant march from Dartmouth to London (Sept. 1470), all the seafaring interest being on his side. The Londoners, though Edward was personally popular among them, despised his queen and her family and had begun to find the extravagant court a burden. Edward fled headlong to his brother-in-law Charles the Bold, and Warwick brought Henry VI out of the Tower and proclaimed him king once more, taking the government into his own hands.

But the unhappy Henry was now almost crazed by the miseries of his imprisonment; Margaret's invasion with Prince Edward in support of Warwick was delayed, and Clarence considered himself injured in being cut off from hope of the Crown. When, therefore, the duke of Burgundy provided Edward with the means of returning in arms, and he landed at the mouth of the Humber "to claim his dukedom," like Henry IV, Clarence deserted his allies and carried over his troops to Edward. Warwick marched out from London to face Edward and met defeat and death at the battle of Barnet (April, 1471).

Margaret and the prince of Wales had landed that very day at Weymouth, and, on receiving the fatal tidings turned to the west in the desperate hope of support if they could reach Wales or Cheshire. But Edward, marching rapidly from London, intercepted them at Tewkesbury and won another complete victory, at the close of which he put to death his principal captives, Prince Edward, the duke of Somerset, Courtenay, Audley and other chiefs. As soon as the victorious young king reached London (to find that a Neville admiral had nearly taken it during his absence), the death of Henry VI was announced and his corpse shown to the people. No one doubted that he had been murdered, either by the command of Edward or that of his brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester. The unhappy Margaret was kept a prisoner till ransomed by the king of France, four years later, in return for her cession to him of her faint claims on Anjou and Sicily or, as English queen, on Guienne. Edward IV could now rule in triumph. The Lancastrians had no longer a cause,

and in self-defence submitted to him as quickly as possible, led by the Percies, that they might escape revenge and robbery at the hands of the Yorkist lords. The slaughter in and after Edward's battles and the acts of attainder passed by obedient parliaments, from 1455, had destroyed or nearly destroyed a number of families formerly powerful and wealthy, and left their possessions for the Yorkist king to give to the Woodvilles and his other supporters.

Consequently Edward IV is the first sovereign since Henry II able to rule practically despotically. He "lived of his own," the first king able to do so since the Saxons, his "own" including the vast possessions of York, Lancaster, Mortimer and Neville, besides the Crown lands. This ideal position, which Parliament for two centuries had vainly admonished the sovereign to attain, was the strongest ground of his absolutism since, needing few more money grants beyond the customs and other regular dues, which had been voted to him for life on his accession, he did not call parliaments. Next, his independence enabled him to supplement his revenues now and then by exacting judicial fines, or by requesting "gifts," much like Richard II. They were called *Benevolences* and were, as a rule, taken from the rich, but terrorism in judicial forms was used to the middle classes and even to the comfortably off peasantry, who liked to call themselves on such occasions "the poor." "The rich were hanged by the purse and the poor by the neck," says one reporter; but the poor found that they too might escape, even seven shillings was accepted from such as had to sell their best clothing to raise it: "and so the king had out of Kent much good and little love." In Norfolk, the king had "gone so near the people" as actually to lower the prices of merchandise, because not enough coin was left for ordinary purposes. He might disregard the general ill-will, having no rival and keeping always a strong guard about himself, but it was ominous for the future of his children that the popularity he had in youth enjoyed now surrounded his brother Richard, duke of Gloucester. Clarence finally paid the penalty of his treachery in 1478 when Edward caused him to be attainted by parliament and executed secretly in prison.

To Gloucester the more astute of the new, ambitious nobles had attached themselves—John Howard, who was soon to become duke of Norfolk, the de la Poles who, after 1450, had changed their politics and become Yorkist, and all those who resented the rise of the Woodvilles. Gloucester alone seemed to have come with any credit out of Edward's ignominious foreign activities, and he reaped the honours of the invasion of Scotland in 1482, when he led an army to Edinburgh and recovered Berwick.

Edward IV had intrigued with the opposition party among the Scottish nobles, their king, James III, being true to his agreement with the Lancastrians, who had allowed him to recover Roxburgh and Berwick. This outbreak of war was, as usual, one side of the English policy towards France.

Edward IV had to repay the generosity of his brother-in-law, the duke of Burgundy, by an attack on France. But by the time that he at length conducted a costly army to Calais (1475), Louis XI had already checkmated Charles the Bold (or the Rash) and adroitly offered Edward handsome terms to go home again—a royal marriage for his daughter Elizabeth and a large annual pension, or "tribute," as the English king preferred to call it. Most of his principal nobles also gladly accepted the presents of money bestowed by Louis, Richard alone manifesting his independence by only accepting a steed and some pieces of plate. He opposed this Treaty of Pecquigny but, of course, quite ineffectively.

But in 1477 Charles of Burgundy was destroyed by the Swiss mountaineers, and soon after the city of Ghent, as guardian of his grandchildren and heirs, concluded a treaty on behalf of Flanders with Louis XI which relieved him of the necessity of humouring the English any longer; the tributes ceased and the marriage negotiations were contemptuously dropped: Edward had been fooled (1483). He threatened war, but in a few months he died, and the uneasy peace between England and France which had lasted, almost unbroken, for thirty years, was destined to endure for another thirty years.

XXXVII

PARLIAMENT AND PRIVY COUNCIL—FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

THE real history of the English Parliament began when Edward I resolved to join the great body of the people—*la commune*—the Commons, with the bishops and barons in the greatest Council of the kingdom. Magna Carta (1215) had asserted that the king must obtain the consent of the Great Council before collecting any taxes, and during the thirteenth century this general gathering varied much in numbers and nature. Henry II used to send a personal summons to each important baron and prelate, but there were a great many tenants-in-chief who held small fiefs, and others who did not hold feudally at all, but by some duty other than that of military service. There were also the clergy other than the bishops, deans, abbots and priors who got personal summonses, and some of the latter tried to avoid the unpleasant duty of attending councils by saying that they were not technically barons, but held in charity—"in pure alms." For these numerous small tenants-in-chief Henry II had sent a general order to each sheriff to cause them to be notified in the shire (or county) court, but as, of course, they neither could nor would attend a Council in any number the ministers of Richard I and John devised the plan of bidding the sheriffs make the county court elect a few who must come, whenever the government really wanted their presence.

As the county courts were composed of persons from all the free classes of society they were really representative, and when they were bidden to elect knights to represent the shire, these knights might reasonably be held to represent the great mass of ordinary land-holders.

In all the countries of western Europe the permanent existence of distinct orders of society was recognised, and in several the attempt was made to get each class, or *Estate*, to take its share in the work of government and the duty of paying for it. In England three Estates of the Realm were by Edward I recognised and called to meet in Council—Clergy, Lords, Commons.

Now the clergy had long been accustomed to meet in assemblies for joint action. Every diocese had its Synod, and the two provinces in which the English dioceses were grouped, of Canterbury and York, had each a Convocation, to which the upper clergy all came,

while the parish clergy sent elected representatives. The clergy much preferred to meet by themselves in their usual way rather than take another dangerous and costly journey to a parliament, and they obtained permission to have their convocation at the same time as parliament and to vote their own taxes in it, although the king insisted that the bishops and the greater abbots who had to furnish him with feudal knights, being truly barons, must come to parliament also, along with the other lords.

(1) *Taxation* was the first great problem for the solution of which parliament was gradually organised. Whether a king wanted money for national defence, like Edward I, or for personal extravagance, like Edward II, or was rigidly economical, like Henry IV, he required more money than his people thought was reasonable. While the larger the demands of parliament were in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for a vigorous war or for better government, the less inclined the members were to calculate the cost and pay it.

At first, in the thirteenth century, royal appeals to the parliament for money grants were somewhat exceptional, made for special purposes, and therefore Edward I tried several ways of persuasion. From the beginning he called on the cities and towns to send representatives as well as the counties, since the commercial wealth of the merchants and shippers was concentrated in the towns. Several times he assembled merchants only, a plan his grandson Edward III also used, the sovereign finding that they by themselves were more persuadable than an entire parliament. But of this parliament also was aware and successfully insisted that merchants by themselves were not an Estate nor their meetings a Great Council. Only a complete parliament should grant taxes.

This was not the only item of disagreement between king and parliament on the royal rights in money matters; it took two centuries to settle all the disputes over the simple words of Magna Carta and to define its meaning to fit a more complicated age.

Thus the king claimed that he was entitled to take old accustomed payments, such as a levy of money from towns and villages on the *Ancient Demesne*. Royal Demesne covered all that had ever belonged to pre-conquest kings, and nearly all the towns, though a few (*e.g.* Coventry, Bridgwater) had grown up on private fiefs, and a few others (Bristol, Leicester) had been granted to an earl. Such a levy, taken from time to time on their own properties by all feudal lords, was called a *tallage*, and the Crown did not give up the right for a long time, except in the principal city of the kingdom—London, which rather selfishly pleaded that though other towns were liable, the Conqueror's charter implied no tallages for the Londoners.

One by one the various claims or subterfuges of the Crown about taxes were met and resisted, the greatest concession made being that of 1297.

By the end of the fourteenth century it was settled that no tax

could be raised by royal authority alone, and the dependence of Henry IV on parliament enabled it to go further and require that some proof should be given that the money was spent on fit objects. The Commons began then to *audit* the accounts of the Treasurers.

Nevertheless, the victory over taxation proved an empty one when the epoch of violence had placed a military monarch on the throne. Edward IV, and other kings after him, devised the plan of exacting gifts—*benevolences*—and of borrowing money from unwilling lenders without interest or repayment—*forced loans*—nor had parliament discovered any way of preventing these abuses before the Middle Ages came to an end.

(2) The great weapon which parliament had against the sovereign was its power of bargaining. If grants could be withheld a king might have to purchase them by concessions. Just as every town had discovered that it was worth while to pay a king or a lord in return for privileges which made life freer and trade more profitable, so did the parliaments, before paying attention to the request for money, draw up a petition to the king to grant some favour or remedy some wrong. Under Edward III these petitions were continual and the king would grant them by his reply : *Soit droit fait comme il est desiré.* Or occasionally he would reject them by the polite formula : *Le roy s'avisera.*

When the king had granted a petition it was for him, or rather his ministers, to recast the petition in the form of a command and have it published as a law or *Statute.* Copies of it would be fastened up in public places, such as the doors of cathedrals, or sent to the mayors of towns and sheriffs of counties to be read aloud in the local meetings. Parliament found that sometimes the wording of the Statute had been altered from that of the petition so much that a serious difference resulted, favouring the Crown or its officers against the public, and a contest took place, till parliament secured the rule that the Statute must be expressed exactly in the words of the petition. This made parliament, with royal assent, the actual and only legislating power.

(3) There was a third great contest over the carrying out of the statutes. This, which meant the practical work of government, was the business of ministers : and the struggle on the part of Parliament to *secure control over ministers* was begun at the close of the long reign of Edward III and lasted until 1688. From 1688 for fully two centuries the control of Parliament was undisputed, but the twentieth century has seen the problem reopened.

The Ministers were the king's officers, appointed by and responsible to him : nor did the Parliament of the fourteenth century wish to take upon itself the responsibility of either choosing ministers or suggesting to them a line of policy. When the Commons were asked to give their opinion about the French war they respectfully refused, hinting that it was not their business; the responsibility was for the king and the lords.

All the same, ministers who disappointed Parliament or roused its suspicion found that the Crown could not always protect them.

In the last year of Edward III the indignation of both Houses led to the first *impeachments*. With the approval of the Black Prince, the Commons (1376) charged the Chamberlain, Lord Latimer, the financier, Lyons—through whom Latimer in the royal name, negotiated with London merchants—and the royal favourite, Alice Perrers, with defrauding the king and the realm, and causing the sale of justice. The Lords, as the highest law-court of the realm from which no appeal could be made, heard the charges and the evidence, and, pronouncing that the culprits were guilty, sentenced them to imprisonment and heavy fines.

The victory was only apparent. The "Good" Parliament soon dispersed, and John of Gaunt liberated the criminals the moment the Black Prince died (1377).

Though impeachments of ministers proved as yet vain, the Houses succeeded better in protecting ministers against royal vindictiveness.

When Edward III strove to make a scapegoat of Archbishop Stratford, parliament declared that he had the right to be tried by his peers, in this case the House of Lords, and this was ever after taken to be the rule for the trial of lords, ecclesiastical or lay.

When John of Gaunt imprisoned the courageous Speaker of the Good Parliament the next parliaments continued to demand his release and got him freed by refusing to work without him. It was a method successfully tried in later times.

But the failure to make ministers answerable to parliament led to the violent assertion of popular judgment by riot and murder, in 1381 and 1450. Parliament tried a subtler method in the fifteenth century by requesting Henry IV and Henry V to put certain persons into, or out of, their Council, but though the sovereign agreed, this did not secure the sympathy of the whole Council with the wishes of Parliament and had little effect. In fact, very slight success met parliamentary efforts at control of policy, which were proved to be utterly in vain, during the Wars of the Roses, by the packed parliaments which met after almost every battle and passed the Acts of Attainder to suit the victors.

The failure of parliament as an engine of government during the later Middle Ages was due to several causes. No one as yet dreamed of making parliament supreme over the Crown. But a supremacy must exist somewhere when orders are to be given and carried out.

If the *Council* could have been directly controlled by the Houses this would have meant a parliamentary naming of ministers and direction of policy and of executive. But this Council, though practically a cabinet of ministers, was understood to be the king's personal and private council.

When the Great Council had grown and changed until it merged into parliament it was natural and necessary that the kings, Henry III and Edward I, should make a practice of keeping their principal

ministers and most trusted lords together as a smaller council to help and advise them. Under Edward II the Council had a regular organisation and a clerk, and during the fourteenth century it acted constantly as a superior authority, as if endowed with a royal and sometimes arbitrary power, useful when it dealt with special difficulties, but which sometimes even over-rode the law-courts. In the latter part of that century the great lords insisted on being members of this inner or private (*Privy*) Council, and the long difficulties of Henry VI's reign established it both as the usual executive and as a machine for dealing with all business which did not belong to some particular department. Clearly the combination of regular authority with emergency powers strengthened the Privy Council at the expense of both Crown and Parliament.

It is no wonder, then, that a Chief Justice accused it of arbitrary acts, and that the great lords, such as York or Warwick, frightened the less powerful members. It was merely another tool whereby the magnates got their own way, and the minor members became notoriously corrupt. Henry VII first restored it to its proper functions.

The influence of money among those who were to exercise the powers of government, whether members of parliament or members of the king's Privy Council, seems to have become notorious by the end of the reign of Edward II. In the fifteenth century fear rather than bribery was the weapon used by the great. But the dread of expense was one which largely affected the election of Members of Parliament until the end of the fifteenth century. Knights of the shire paid their own expenses, but the boroughs had to defray the costs of their members. They found three ways of getting out of this duty. A local magnate might wish to appoint, and pay the member, as did the prior at St. Albans; or, as at Bridgwater, a town might steadily elect a gentleman who had his own motives for being in parliament and would pay his own expenses; while the towns of Lancashire, including Manchester, clubbed together to bribe the sheriff to certify the king that they were all too poor to send members.

Hence it was among the Knights of the Shire, rather than among the town members, that independence was found.

XXXVIII

ENGLAND AND IRELAND DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

THE relations of England with Ireland during the Middle Ages were by no means as close as might be imagined, considering the near neighbourhood of the two islands, for they were determined by several and much-varying conditions. While Britain came under Roman rule, and so continued for four centuries, Ireland remained outside the Roman Empire, and the only connection between the two islands was due to the slave-merchants who, during the slow break-up of the Empire, used to seize or purchase British inhabitants to sell to the Irish. The latter, free from external dangers, had attained to some degree of wealth, and to a domestic civilisation based on a tribal system and maintained by the toil of a large slave population which the gold found in their own land enabled them to buy from abroad.

It was in this manner that Patrick was carried off from southern Wales to become, in time, the most famous apostle of Ireland, and after him religion for some centuries formed a second and a happier tie between the two islands.

When the Anglo-Saxon invasions had altered the whole face of England, Irish missionaries repaid the debt they owed by coming to the Britons of the west to re-evangelise the isolated Celtic tribes of Cornwall, and to convert the Picts of Scotland (*see* Chapter III). Later, they came to study in the great Christian centre at Glastonbury, and Ireland became a place of shelter for Welsh and Scottish clergy, nobles and princes, and even for Northumbrian refugees.

Ireland, then the Isle of Saints, sent forth her sons to carry the Gospel and the lamp of learning to the Teutonic tribes of central and Germanic Europe. Irish manuscripts of beautiful design are found in the Abbeys of the Alps; and stone crosses carved in Irish patterns in the Shetland and Orkney Isles. Scandinavian traders found their way to the excellent natural harbours of Ireland, and carried the gold of her mines as far as the Baltic.

But these kindly relations with Britain and the continent were rudely interrupted by the scourge of the early Middle Ages—the Vikings.

The fury of the Norsemen against Christianity destroyed entire communities of monks, with all their precious books and tools, and broke the continuity of tradition.

When the wave of savagery began slowly to subside, native and Celtic Ireland was more barbarous, more disunited than before, and the settlements of the invaders, though too strong to be absorbed by the native tribes, were not strong enough to master them. These settlements were, of course, in the best harbours, Wexford (*-fiord*) perhaps the oldest, but Dublin the principal; Limerick, something of a rival to Dublin; Waterford and Cork. Counting in the Isle of Man, these Norse colonists (called Ostmen), dominated the sea between the two great islands and cut off the Celtic tribes in Wales and Ireland from each other for a time, thus isolating the Irish Christians as the Britons had, earlier, been isolated by the English.

The Irish Church, therefore, had no chances of recovering its former learning and art, and it ceased to progress. As in Wales, but to a worse degree, it became involved in the domestic and political savagery of the tribal system. Clergy and bishops collected in unregulated monasteries, whence they might travel as wandering preachers, without sees or parishes; or, if they adopted a fixed home in the tribal district, they frequently married and passed on their church or bishopric to a son. It was quite possible for a chief to be also the bishop of his tribe, or *sept*. In consequence, no advance was made from the barbarous code of blood feuds, in which clergy and monks were sometimes involved, nor from the old heathenish marriage customs. Nor was a united resistance ever offered to the Vikings. Heroic attempts were made from time to time by patriotic chiefs, but all were ruined by treachery among the Irish themselves. Even the comparatively successful effort of Brian Boru, the famous head-king of Ireland, was thus spoiled. He —after Ireland had been harried for nearly two centuries—defeated the last great Viking alliance at the battles of Glenmama (1000) and Clontarf (1014), but the jealousy of certain Irish septs hindered their expulsion and brought about such a weakening of what might have been a ruling family, that Ireland was little the better for the victory.

The two centuries of Viking invasions had created a third and a dismal connection between England and Ireland. The colonies of the Ostmen, which kept up a close connection with Scandinavia, supplied reinforcements to the English Danes. Edward the Elder and Ethelflaed had garrisoned Chester and the Mersey valley to prevent communication between Dublin and York. Athelstan had to fight by the Solway, at Brunanburh; but there were too many ports to guard, and up to the Norman Conquest, Ireland continued to be the land of refuge for all raiders and rebels. From Ireland Harold drew ships and marauders to coerce Edward the Confessor, as, later, his sons did to disturb William. It was easy to obtain mercenary troops, by promises of plunder, and to the end of the Middle Ages the temptation was great for English adventurers.

A fourth and more promising connection was that of commerce,

and this was, strange as it may seem, also the work of the Ostmen. In spite of their piratical habits, the descendants of the Vikings had not lost the Scandinavian aptitude for trade. The Ostmen's ports conducted a steady traffic, not only with Chester and, probably, with some Welsh ports, but with Bristol—far enough up the Avon to be secure from sudden piracy—and even with Rouen.

In the eleventh century they carried to these ports large quantities of marten fur, easily obtained in the Irish forests, and in great demand for lining winter cloaks and tunics, and they took back all kinds of civilised goods, and, from Bristol, at all events, slaves. Even after Wulfstan's death the slave trade certainly was resumed for a time.

The Norman conquest of England gave a stimulus to commerce. The Norman lords were glad to develop their seaboard villages into ports and not only did Chester, Bristol and Gloucester increase their intercourse with the opposite shore, but other places, *e. g.* Bridgwater and Cardiff, began to thrive upon it.

Once more, too, the Church became a peacemaker. The time arrived, at the end of the tenth century, when the Norse rulers of Dublin accepted, at least nominally, the Christian faith. And after the battle of Clontarf the conversion of the population of the Norse ports became more genuinely accomplished by missionaries from England and the continent. This was just at the time when Cnut, the Dane, began to rule over a combined Anglo-Danish kingdom, and not unnaturally the Ostmen of Dublin and Waterford looked to England rather than to the Irish tribes for the teaching and ordination of their clergy and bishops.

These townsmen and sailors were now far ahead of the Irish in the domestic as in the military and nautical arts. Their buildings, their carving, smithy and jewel work, boat-building, etc., proved them to be more civilised and progressive, and they despised the natives with their rude tribal system and half-savage monks. Dublin became a See in 1040, Waterford later, and before the close of the century the king of Dublin with the bishops and chief men of the ports decided to organise their church on the orderly, dignified system which they had seen in England and in Normandy. Their bishops were regularly consecrated by Lanfranc and his four next successors; they recognised the archbishops of Canterbury as their metropolitan, and their clergy went to study in the English colleges. It was, perhaps, in recognition of this extended influence of the English primate that Pope Urban II greeted the venerable Anselm, when he visited Rome, as "the pope of another world"—England and Ireland seemed almost as far and mysterious to Roman clergy as America did to the Elizabethans.

Unhappily this natural connection was not maintained. Anselm himself was always anxious to shift responsibility to the pope, and he directed the more zealous Irish clergy to Normandy or Rome for guidance.

In the anarchy of Stephen's time it was safer and even easier to go thither than to Canterbury. And Rome was then almost at the height of her influence. She made an admirable effort to reconcile the two discordant churches in Ireland, that of the progressive Norse, or Ostmen, and the old Celtic Church, which regarded the Sees of Dublin, Limerick and Waterford with bitter hatred. The influence of a great Celtic bishop, the sainted Malachy of Armagh (*d.* 1140), had been exerted to obtain reform and union, and in 1152 a papal legate visited Ireland.

He presided over a synod of the whole Island, planned out sees, recognised Armagh as the metropolitan See, but Dublin also as an archbishopric, and enjoined upon the bishops the elementary principles of order, as, that each bishop should attend to his own See, and all use the recognised liturgy, instead of compiling a variety. Monks, too, were to abide in their monasteries; the barbarous laxity of marriage among the laity was to be reformed, and many superstitions were forbidden, as, for example, baptising the children of chiefs by dipping them in milk.

But the report which the legate took back to Rome was so disheartening that Hadrian IV, the first and only English pope (1154), on learning that the powerful young King Henry II contemplated the annexation of Ireland, as a provision for a younger brother, sent letters warmly commending the plan and a ring—the well-understood symbol of clerical investiture. But Henry had then more than enough to do in his own dominions and took no step to reduce Ireland to submission to either king or pope until, a dozen years later, his hand was forced.

The principal kingdoms into which Ireland was subdivided (1169) were:—Connaught, the king of which ranked as head-king, Meath, which was often a kind of appanage for the head-king, Ulster, Leinster, Desmond (S. Munster), and the smaller "kingdoms" of Thomond, Ossory, Breifny, etc., for every tribal chief was termed a king and between them war raged ceaselessly. A king of Leinster, Dermot MacMurrough, who had carried off the wife of another chief, refused to submit to the ruling of the head-king, was attacked by a combination of enemies and fled from Ireland to the court of Henry II to invite him to come and conquer the country.

The king declined to interfere, but allowed Dermot to address himself to some of the barons, only one of whom, a ruined member of the de Clare family, felt tempted by the Irish chief's inducements. Richard de Clare, called, like his father, "Strongbow," titular earl of Pembroke and Striguil (Chepstow) had, with his father, been a strong supporter of Stephen, and having lost his estates on Henry's accession, was ready to try his fortunes in Ireland. Dermot offered him the hand of his daughter and therewith the "succession" to the "kingdom" of Leinster. De Clare could hardly know that Dermot had no right whatever to give such a pledge. In Irish custom (*Brehon Law*) the land was the land of the tribe, and Dermot's chieftainship

was elective. The succession rules and individual land-holding to which the Normans and all the continent were accustomed, were unknown to the Irish, just as Brehon custom was unknown and almost unimaginable to Normans.

Landless man as Strongbow was, he had connections in South Wales, and a family troop of adventurers, Norman-Welsh by race, agreed to support him and Dermot in a great raid upon Ireland. These adventurers were the FitzGeralds, FitzStephens, and de Barrys, children and grandchildren of a Welsh princess, Nesta, and her successive Norman husbands. They collected their kin and some mercenary soldiers, including a large body of archers, and sailed in three ships to Wexford. With spiteful cunning Dermot had promised this seaport (over which, of course, he had no shadow of right) to FitzStephen, and the unhappy town was at once attacked and taken. The trained and mounted men-at-arms, with their long lances, clad in suits of ringmail, and the skilled archers, whether Norman, Fleming or Welsh, protected by coats of wadded linen, were practically invincible among half-naked Irish armed with battle-axes and slings, but the Ostmen in the ports offered a fierce resistance to the unprovoked attack, only with the result that in 1171 Waterford and Dublin were cruelly sacked.

Thus Dermot had turned his new allies against the only civilised places, with which, had the Norman-Welsh only known more of the facts, they might have formed an alliance against the natives.

Further fighting resulted in extended success, Dermot found himself a king again; the king of Connaught, Rory, or Roderic, O'Connor, took care at first to remain aloof; great slaughter took place of Dermot's enemies, and the Norman-Welsh began fortifying themselves in the ruins of Wexford and Waterford and other suitable spots. The news of these triumphs reached Henry II in the midst of the sudden crisis produced by the murder of Becket. He was not desirous of seeing a de Clare, or any other of his vassals, become independent in the neighbouring island, and he determined, combining two aims, to betake himself out of the reach of papal messengers while he should promptly assert his royal authority over the territories now being conquered by his vassals. They were ready, and probably glad to welcome him as their suzerain, for now that the Ostmen had been destroyed by the invaders a number of the native Irish tribes had succeeded in combining under the king of Connaught, and were besieging the invaders in Wexford, Waterford and Dublin.

Henry went rapidly through Wales, with a strong force, and landed safely at Waterford. There was no opposition to so powerful a king and army. Henry marched first to Cashel, the Irish national centre, then to Dublin, the centre of all the other elements of the population. To the one place or the other came the chiefs of nearly all the tribes and the bishops of the Church to acknowledge Henry as sovereign. The alliance between the king and the Church was

natural; Henry ordered a great Synod to meet at Cashel, and there the bishops again ordained the observation of Christian baptism and marriage, and made rules for the payment of tithes, for a provision for widows and children out of a dead man's property, for the abolition of the Irish custom of quartering chiefs and their followers upon clergy and monks, and other like matters. They hoped that a royal government would enforce these laws at last.

But as soon as Henry heard that the messengers of papal forgiveness were on their way he was anxious to return to Normandy. He therefore settled Irish affairs rapidly on the feudal plan familiar to him and his barons. Meath was given (for the service of fifty knights) to the most trustworthy lord he could then spare, de Lacy; Leinster, but without its towns, to Strongbow; Wexford, the gate of the country, to a trusted servant, FitzAldelin, ancestor of the de Burghs; other districts near the coast to the FitzStephens, FitzGeralds and the other adventurers; but Dublin, the principal town and the obvious capital, Henry gave (true to his reliance on townsfolk as a counterpoise to feudal lords) to the burgesses of Bristol, a port always staunch in lŏyalty to his grandfather, his mother and himself. Bristol sent over a colony to take possession, and to make room for them many of the old inhabitants were driven away and had to leave all their property and fly to save their lives among the Irish. Thus the establishment of a free corporation and the increase of its trade with Chester and Bristol was spoiled by the creation of a new feud.

Henry II did not, however, ignore the native Irish altogether.

A hurried journey into the south of Ireland had produced submission on the part of several native chiefs, whom he had enfeoffed of their own districts: McCarthy in Desmond, but without Cork; O'Brien in Thomond, but without Limerick; O'Rorke in Breifny, and others. The towns were to be garrisoned and held by the invaders, and thus about half of Ireland would be held, in feudal fashion, by lords, Norman or native, who recognised the king of England's supremacy.

The Norman, Welsh, English and continental settlers and all within their fiefs were, naturally, to observe the system of law which the king was then energetically establishing in England, and which was to be administered by judges and courts. But as Henry was unable to remain in the land to establish officials himself, these elementary beginnings had to be left to his deputy, de Lacy, entitled Constable of Ireland, and for a long while were quite secondary in importance to military matters, since the newcomers had to maintain themselves by arms as soon as the king disappeared.

Henry II made no attempt to interfere further in the northerly parts of Ireland than to grant parts of Ulster as fiefs to certain barons, if they liked to conquer them, and he recognised O'Connor as king of Connaught and overlord of the other Irish chiefs, in return for that king's formal submission to himself.

Henry's attention was concentrated on the new colony; so long as the new tenants-in-chief did not rebel, but would bring an increased following of troops from their new fiefs to join his feudal array, he was content to leave them to deal with the natives in their own way. The newly-established Church he could use, as he did in his other dominions, to maintain his own authority. He made representatives of the clergy come over to meet him at Evesham, when the Archbishopric of Dublin had to be filled, and took care that they elected an Englishman to the office. The relations between feudal lords and Irish chiefs were marked by perfidy and cruelty on both sides. The latter swore oaths and broke them at the first promising moment, the former revoked the grants and pledges their fathers had made. The ignorance, on both sides, of the customs and language of the opposite race is illustrated by an incident in 1184, when Henry II sent his youngest son John, a youth of nineteen, to reinforce the military colony. The native chiefs near Waterford hastened to pay their homage on his arrival, and bestowed heartily on the prince and his retinue their customary kiss of peace. This, from the shaggy-haired, bearded clansmen, seemed little short of an insult to the elegantly dressed, trimly-shaven Angevins, who retorted by laughing and sneezing and tweaking the long beards of their visitors. Mortally offended, the chiefs retired, sent their families away to safety and arranged with the king of Connaught and other distant chiefs a sudden onslaught which almost overwhelmed John's forces, and destroyed the new strongholds and many of the colonists with them. After this, it was clear that the two races would be implacable enemies, and that the feudal settlers would hold little more than they could control from their castles.

The Plantagenet settlement, in fact, was based on castles, beside which were planted a large number of monasteries. To these, as to the parishes and bishoprics, no Irish were admitted; all were garrisoned with foreigners, from Normandy, Wales, or Henry's other dominions. For, though the Irish invariably term the settlement a "Saxon" invasion, that race was certainly the one least represented. The new monasteries, however, set, as they had done before in England, an example of discipline, learning and good agriculture, which was not without effect upon the Irish monks.

Not till after John was crowned were definite steps taken to provide a government other than military for the newly settled districts. He visited Ireland in 1210 with some success, recognising the new O'Connor chief, Cahal, as over-king of the Irish, and in return obtaining his homage. He also set up the English shire-system, by marking out twelve counties—much as the House of Alfred had long ago done in the conquered Dane lands: Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Louth, Carlow, Kilkenny, Cork, Kerry, Tipperary, Limerick, Wexford, Waterford.

Thenceforth judges, sheriffs and shire-courts were appointed, and

the law of England ordered to be observed: Edward I took care that his own new laws and codes should be sent to the responsible officers. The king was always represented in Ireland by a Constable, or Justiciar, or Lieutenant (the titles were changed, but the effect was the same) who was expected to issue orders in emergencies. Unfortunately, a successful lieutenant was likely to be regarded with suspicion by the king, and with resentment by the feudal lords whose superior he was. Throughout the thirteenth century a steady stream of emigration took place from England. Our population was increasing, the Irish fief-holders and seaports welcomed settlers; and could a way of reconciling the opposing habits of the two populations have been found, they might have come to coalesce in time, since there was ample room for both in the island. Fresh towns and ports became prosperous: Youghal, Trim and Kilkenny, Dundalk, Drogheda, Louth, Ross and Carrickfergus. Dublin became a University in 1320.

But the fatal flaw in the Plantagenet system was the perpetuation of the distinction between Irish and English—the descendants of the settlers having all come to speak English. The whole of the royal system applied only to the English and their twelve counties, called the *English Pale*. The Irish had their Brehon Law, administered by themselves, but it was not applicable to an Englishman. Thus justice was done according to English law between Englishman and Englishman, and according to Brehon, between Irishman and Irishman, but between Englishman and Irishman there could be no justice, since the Irishman was not recognised in the county courts of *The Pale*, nor did the English recognise for themselves the Brehon Law. Within the counties the Irish were at the mercy of the colonists and the officials, and the only resort they had was to ambush and violence.

At the beginning of the reign of Edward I an opportunity occurred for closing this gulf. The Irish within or near the twelve counties petitioned to be taken under English law, and Edward directed the justiciar to investigate the question, which could hardly be settled by a stroke of the pen, involving as it did alterations in charters, treaties, law-courts and personal privileges (1277). He also ordered a parliament, chosen as in England, to assemble, but as nothing resulted it is believed that the feudal lords contrived to defeat the royal proposal, which they regarded as against their interests, and that Edward, plunged in war and needing their military help, dared not offend them. All that he could do was to grant charters to various Irish families admitting them to English Law, and at length five of the most eminent septs, called the *Five Bloods*, were thus included: O'Neill, O'Connor, O'Brien, O'Malaghlin and Macmurrough, being the dominant tribes, respectively, of Ulster, Connaught, Thomond, Meath and Leinster.

The legal manner of expressing the inability of the royal law-courts to deal with actions concerning Irishmen not belonging to the

Five Bloods was to say that the case *was no felony, i. e.* not a crown case under that heading, if it affected a *meer* (pure-blooded) Irishman. This has given rise to the myth that the judges regarded Irish lives as valueless and deliberately exposed them to destruction. The practical result of the Plantagenet mistake was, no doubt, to encourage a kind of blood feud between the two races.

The kings had tried to avoid or mitigate this state of violence by using the plan of the Norman settlers on the Welsh border and creating a number of *palatine* lordships, *i. e.* fiefs in which the baron held all powers of the Crown himself. This concession was intended to make him more energetic in defending his barony, in practice it superseded royal law and courts by military justice or injustice which grew more and more to resemble the rough and ready methods of the Irish. The feudalism which the Plantagenets were putting down in England they were encouraging in Ireland.

Feudalism required a subject population to till the soil and obey orders, and this the scanty Welsh and English settlers in the Pale neither could nor would supply. Accordingly, the colonists admitted the natives again to their ancient homes, so long as they observed a sufficient obedience, and very soon contrived easy methods of compromise.

This system did not result—as possibly might be expected—in elevating the Irish to a higher standard of civilisation but, on the contrary, in dragging down the master race towards the native level. The larger population, with its crude and violent customs, attracted to its ways the smaller and isolated race. The barons and the descendants of the other settlers began to marry with the Irish and to adopt some of the customs of their chiefs, such as *coyne and livery* (an Irish and a feudal word combined). *Coiney* was the right of a chief to be fed by his subjects, if he should for a time quarter himself upon a family : the feudal barons combined this with the duty of a lord to provide for his retinue, by sending his men to quarter themselves upon the population. Sometimes the results were so grievous as to empty the villages, whose inhabitants fled into the wilds, or to the Irish districts, rather than face the exactions of the soldiery. *Fostering* or bringing up children not at home but in the houses of dependants was also adopted, whereby children learned native habits and superstitions before they had learned those of their parents. Before the thirteenth century had run out the feudal lords were adopting the manners of the Irish chiefs, their long hair and moustaches, their dress and language, and mixing Brehon with English law in their rough-and-ready justice.

In this way a real fusion was beginning between the two races, which might, could it have been accepted and directed by the Crown, have led to friendly relations between the two countries.

But the tendency of the English colonists to merge their nationality in the Irish appeared to the royal officers very dangerous, and their appeal produced a special decree from Edward I, as anxious

as they to maintain the race and customs of England. English lords of fiefs were ordered not to absent themselves but to take steps to keep up roads and bridges there; all the English in Ireland were forbidden to wear the Irish dress and moustaches, or to keep great troops of "kerns"—the native fighting-men, idle and quarrelsome.

The principal families which had already rooted themselves firmly in the land are: (1) Fitzgerald, or Geraldines, as the Irish named them. They were earls of Kildare and of Desmond, and dominated those districts and most of Leinster and Munster. (2) Butler, whose territories of Kilkenny and Ormonde made them natural rivals of the Geraldines. Their chiefs became earls of Ormonde and (later) of Ossory. Their policy was to maintain a close connection with England, in opposition to the Geraldine plan of allying with Irish chiefs. The Ormonde earls were careful to marry and educate their heirs in England and were habitually loyal to the Crown. (3) The de Burghs, who had the title of earl of Ulster and large grants in Ulster and Connaught, which they had not yet succeeded in wholly annexing when the murder of the third earl left his infant daughter his titular heiress. Edward III married her to his second son, Lionel, intending thus to provide him with the opportunity of acquiring a principality; but the other de Burghs, who already were called by their Irish kindred and neighbours, Bourke, scornfully rejected the headship of a girl, and formally and thoroughly cast off their original nationality, adopted the name of McWilliam, and settled down in Connaught as a really Irish sept. Certainly there was not, by the middle of the fourteenth century, any prospect of permanence or prosperity in Ulster for a family which intended to remain "English."

The Scottish war of the fourteenth century was the decisive cause of the collapse of medieval English rule in Ireland. Bannockburn prompted some native chiefs in Ulster, and the turbulent house of de Lacy, to invite Edward Bruce, brother of Robert, to come and lead a war upon the English. Edward Bruce had already shown that he "thought Scotland too small for himself and his brother," and Robert encouraged him to go. His own wife was a daughter of De Burgh, the "Red Earl" of Ulster, so that a family connection, as well as much local communication, existed already between Carrick in the south-west of Scotland and Ulster.

In 1315 Edward Bruce came with a fine body of troops. The English justiciar, a Butler, was unsuccessful as a general. Among the Irish, a claimant to the O'Connor kingship, and some other pretenders, joined the Scotch invaders, with whom malcontent feudal barons intrigued also, so that a four-sided contest began to rage, kept up with no decisive event for four years.

The Scotch burned all they could—crops, homes, churches and even the woods. They marched through the length and breadth of the country, checked only by the walls of Dublin and the broad waters of the Shannon. Characteristically, the mayor of Dublin

spent the citizens' energy in seizing the "Red Earl" and putting him in prison, for fear of treachery, while the principal English army was employed in "restoring" the original O'Connor prince to his position. But as soon as he was re-established Phelim O'Connor permitted the English soldiers to be massacred, and then a punitive expedition must be sent to punish him. On the field of Athenry (1316) the pick of the sept O'Connor were destroyed.

Next year Robert Bruce, contemptuously disregarding Edward II, came to aid his brother, who had been proclaimed king at Carrickfergus, but he did little save increase the misery of the people. Massacre, famine and pestilence swept over the unhappy island, till, Robert having returned to Scotland, Edward Bruce was hemmed in at Dundalk by Sir John Bermingham, deserted by his Irish allies, defeated and slain (1318).

These four years wiped out the greater part of the inland English population of the Pale. After the tide of invasion had ebbed away, and pestilence died down somewhat, the native Irish began to take possession of the empty farms. No more colonists came from England, where war and plagues left no spare population. Almost the only means of self-preservation for the English colony and barons now was to adapt themselves to native ways sufficiently to procure toleration.

That Edward II sent over Gaveston, and Edward III his son Lionel, to set up a court and issue edicts made little difference. Men were wanted, and men were not available.

Lionel's famous Statute of Kilkenny shows the view and fears of the English governors (1367, re-enacting an earlier edict of 1357). The English were forbidden, under the penalties of treason (*i.e.* death and forfeiture of family property) to use any Irish customs or dress, or to intermarry, foster, or trade in weapons with the natives; the Irish were to be excluded from monasteries and parish livings, and if their cattle were driven on to "English land" they could be confiscated. As vast districts of nominally English land was now uninhabited and used as pasture this would encourage a kind of cattle war.

This desperate attempt at segregating the Anglo-Irish from the natives had even less chance of being carried out than the legislation of Edward I.

In the incessant quarrels between rival lords and rival septs both races continued to tear the country to pieces. The king of France did not fail to add fuel to the fire by stirring up insurrections calculated to divert forces which might otherwise reach France, and the well-meant and not unsympathetic efforts of Richard II came too late to effect anything. He intended his personal friend, the earl of Oxford, to settle Ireland, and created him marquis of Dublin, but de Vere was driven at Radcot Bridge into banishment. When the king himself spent nine months in the country he was baffled by the Irish chief, Macmorrough, and the second time he attempted a

visit, by Henry's invasion. He left behind the earl of March, his heir, and heir also of large Mortimer claims in Ireland, but March was cut off, partly owing to the jealousy of Anglo-Irish rivals, in battle with some Irish chiefs (1398).

All that the fifteenth century could do was to preserve the still dwindling circuit of "the Pale," for though Richard of York came as Lieutenant (1449) in his turn, half as heir and half as pretender to the English crown, he only conciliated the local magnates by lavish hospitality and courtesy in order to obtain in Ireland a secure refuge and some reinforcements for his further adventures in England.

Richard of York was popular with the Anglo-Irish lords, in spite of his recommendation to them to restrict their usage of *coyne and livery*, whereby they were almost destroying their farming tenants. He held a parliament in Dublin, remarkable for its assertion that Ireland (meaning the Anglo-Irish portion), was an independent country and its people (*i.e.* themselves) not subject to any laws but those accepted by their own parliament. The more savage and helpless the colony became, the more lofty became its independent pride.

When the duke of York hastened back to England, in 1451, to attend to his fortunes there, he began the pernicious practice of appointing a deputy: by deputies of deputies, for a long while, the English Pale was to be nominally governed, while its families became more and more Irish in customs and violence. The great earl of Desmond was the most successful of the deputies, but Edward IV displaced him, in 1467, by the notorious Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, known in Italy as the best English patron of learning, and at home as "the butcher of England." Tiptoft's way of enforcing his own authority was forcibly to arrest the two great earls of the south of Ireland, Desmond and Kildare, cause an obedient parliament, at Drogheda, to vote an act of attainder, and then to pardon Kildare, but to execute Desmond and his two infant sons. This crime in form of law was believed to have been instigated by Queen Elizabeth Woodville.

The parliament, which thus ostensibly vindicated its loyalty and independence, had acknowledged its inability to govern even the Pale by enacting that it should be lawful for any free man to slay a thief at sight, and if he bore the head to the nearest town to claim a reward from the mayor: this was the sole way in which it seemed possible to cope with the marauding which was rife everywhere, while an equally contemptible economic regulation strove to prevent the sailors of the ports from mixing with, or paying tolls to, Irish natives: they were actually forbidden to fish in the seas off Irish coasts lest they should do so.

The hopelessness of the position may be gauged from the English definition of the inhabitants of Ireland; they are described by a royal officer—and were to be so described for another two centuries —as consisting of "the king's Irish enemies"—the natives—and "the king's Irish rebels"—the dwellers in the Pale.

XXXIX

THE LIFE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

(A) Popular Development

Compared with the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the fifteenth may seem, at first sight, dull. For its importance cannot be measured by the appearance of any such great men as Robert Grosseteste or Edward I, Chaucer or Wyclif, or by striking events like Bannockburn or the Peasants' Revolt. Its importance consists in the vigorous distribution among the many of knowledge, powers and property which had hitherto been the privilege of the few, and in the rapid development of ideas, already noticeable in the fourteenth century, which at length produced sweeping changes. The fifteenth is the century which transformed the Middle Ages into the semi-modern age of the sixteenth century, and made the England of the Edwards ready to become the England of the Tudors.

In the fifteenth century most Englishmen became thoroughly accustomed to reading books and writing letters, to acting and watching dramatic plays, to taking part in law-suits and public meetings; they became familiar with the Bible, and with reports and discussions about the reforming of the Church. They exhibited a good deal of public spirit in undertaking useful works. Much travelling and letter-writing familiarised people in general with what was done in London, and they discussed politics and ministers and made ballads upon them which served much as newspapers do now.

The development of national knowledge and vigour is obscured by the wars of the fifteenth century, which, whether in France or England, would seem (if it were not for the experience of our own days) to be the last and worst outbreak of an old-fashioned brutality and rapacity. It is characteristic of the unprogressive temper of the military nobles that in their own business they did not advance; though cannon had been used at Crecy, and though Southampton, Bristol and Coventry mounted guns on their walls in the first half of the century, Agincourt and Towton were won by the long-bow; the jousts of Edward IV were only as costly but less dangerous repetitions of the tournaments of Edward III; their armour they even steadily altered for the worse, making it heavier and more solid, till their "plate" had to be screwed on or off them by smiths with pincers and screwdrivers. If

they were unhorsed they lay helpless as logs on the ground, till either the enemy's camp-followers poked knives through the joints of the mail, or the victors hauled them upright when they collected the prisoners. It is credibly stated that in one battle, both sides being equally well-skilled, well-armed and well-horsed, the opposed front ranks galloped so truly to the charge, that they stuck fast, each knight's spear fixed in the mail of his *vis-à-vis*, a perfectly "logical" conclusion from chivalrous premises.

But, just as behind the mailed knights and their over-weighted chargers stood the matchless English archers, who really won the battles, so, behind the turbulent nobility, with its clamorous feuds, was developing the brisk civilian life of squires and farmers (two words of this century), of cloth-manufacturers and silk-weavers, merchants and artisans. These Englishmen were a well-fed, well-dressed, well-educated people. They wrote and spoke in a more modern fashion than Chaucer. They were improving their roads, and their inns; the Norfolk carriers and Richard III's post-service were not so very different from those of the eighteenth century. They were even building themselves better houses, and paving their streets.

The first noticeable point is, perhaps, that social distinctions are vanishing. Quite early in the century it may be difficult to know whether a family is "villein" or not. Not because the labour services have died out; they still are rendered on many, even on the majority of, country manors, but many members of villein families have bought their freedom, or have simply moved away to some other village or town where they work as freemen and are reckoned as such. When Sir Simon Burley claimed a man of Gravesend as his villein, the townsmen offered to pay compensation, but when Burley refused and forcibly carried him off, the town took it as a great insult. Sometimes peasants staying in their own village can take leases of the land and stock of the manor demesne and work it for their own profit, and they gradually cease to be counted as villeins. No longer, again, do only the clergy go to study at Oxford or Cambridge. The universities become recognised places of education for the sons of gentlemen, who go also to London to study law at the Temple. The widow of a judge who was a country squire of Norfolk, Mistress Agnes Paston, having placed a younger son in the Temple, sent word that his tutor was to let her know "by writing how Clement Paston hath do his devoir in learning. And if he hath not do well, nor will not amend . . . that he will truly belash him till he will amend; and so did the last master and the best that ever he had, at Cambridge." She sent the tutor a noble (6*s*. 8*d*.), and promised him ten marks if he would take upon him to bring Clement into good rule and learning. Mistress Paston held an old-fashioned opinion on teaching, against which there had already been protests.

Even if the Inns of Court and the Universities were for the few,

there were grammar schools in every town, and in most thriving villages schools of a more elementary type, probably connected with a chantry, as at Chesterfield, early in the thirteenth century, and Manchester late in the fifteenth. From these schools a promising lad would often be sent to the university, sometimes to one of those colleges which in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were being founded by bishops and nobles who would, in earlier days, have founded monasteries : sometimes at the cost of a wealthy person, to whom, in the fifteenth century, bishops recommended such actions as good works. The Lady Margaret Beaufort was one such patron, but even well-to-do knights thought it creditable to do the same.

The spread of education caused a large demand for books of all kinds. In the universities, and many towns with large schools, professional copyists worked hard to turn out text-books and grammars for the pupils, and large encyclopædias for advanced scholars. Not that the student purchased many of the latter, but the colleges did; tutors and stationers hired books out, and the university used to loan books to students, who pledged money, or a gown or a cup, till they restored the volume. The books in most demand among the general public were of two kinds, either devotional or entertaining. Of the latter, the favourites were books of travels and romances. They were usually translated from the French, and the more marvellous, the more popular, like the *Travels of Sir John Mandeville* at the end of the fourteenth century. Fashionable young men, great ladies, innkeepers, country squires and their daughters, and the middle-class townsfolk, all wanted to read. Each reader might perhaps buy not more than two or three, but they loaned them to each other, and it was quite the proper thing to collect a few. The payment of the copyists was low, one penny or twopence a page; the time had long gone by when the fine writing of the monastic scriptorium was the sacred employment of the few; and scriveners, if less numerous, occupied much the same position as typists and stenographers now.

In the most important sphere of life, the religious sphere, it is difficult to estimate the effect of the multiplication of books and this new habit of reading. Not only were there service-books for clergy and the devout laity, but copies of the Bible, or of portions of it, were apparently quite easy to be had. An entire Bible could be bought for £3 6*s.* 8*d.* (the price of a complete outfit of armour and weapons), though a fine copy would be priced much higher. The very popular collection called the *Golden Legend* was an English version of nearly all the narrative parts of the Old and New Testaments, with a number of the traditional lives of Christian saints added. Such a book might be copied and read by any one, and though the different volumes remaining are very much alike, in the Biblical portions, the slight differences in the versions show that many persons were able to translate, and that,

while there was no one authorised English version of the Scriptures, Wyclif's was by no means the only one, or the principal one, in use. The bishops are sometimes unjustly accused of forbidding the study of the English Bible. What they forbade was, that laymen should use the Wyclifite (or Lollard) version, because the terms used in translating certain parts of the New Testament might give a sense somewhat different from that which the Roman Church had now adopted, and it was, therefore, called heretical. But Caxton printed the *Golden Legend* unhindered.

These translations, and the English hymns and carols used in church, and the constant attendance of people at divine service, made nearly everybody familiar with the Bible story. They could recognise allusions and quotations in sermons, whether in Latin or English, and the paintings on the walls of the churches, which were often drawn by local and not very skilful artists, show that they visualised both the Bible history and the best-known legends quite clearly. They used texts on gravestones much as is the custom now. Whatever may have been the case in Germany, in England certainly the Bible was no closed book, and was possibly more generally familiar then than now.

It is impossible to understand the Middle Ages unless it is remembered that the general interest of all people was in religious matters. The framework of thought and almost of daily life was religious, and the religious system was the same all over western Europe. Its unity was the accepted foundation of thought and belief. Therefore such crying abuses as papal dispensations from oaths and treaties, the sale of absolution for fees, the determining of church lawsuits by bribery, gifts of livings to foreign absentees, the exaction of taxes and gifts, and the like, were felt as wrongs by all classes in all nations, and in the fifteenth century they stirred more indignation among the thoughtful and more discontent among the general public than did the great invasion of France. Worst of all was the schism, or double election of popes.

Early in the century great hopes had been excited by the assembling of an international council at Constance. There were in 1413 three popes, each claiming to be the one Head of the Church, each cursing and warring upon the others. To the mind of that age, such a catastrophe struck at the very root of religion, and the Emperor Sigismund invited all nations to send their delegates to the free city beside Lake Constance to end this schism and to reform the Church (1414–1418).

No such assembly had met since the councils of the Early Church under Constantine and his House. European thinkers had prayed for such an event and reformers had long since appealed to a General Council to purify the Church from abuses. Nothing was too great for such a council to accomplish. Accordingly the nations of Europe sent their wisest to Constance. From Italy, Germany, France, England, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Scandinavia and

Spain came bishops and eminent men. They met with three aims, to end the schism, to purify the Church "in Head and Members" (*i.e.* pope, cardinals, bishops, etc.), and to destroy heresy.

As a tribute to the great position attained by Henry V, the emperor himself visited England to obtain her king's assistance, and the English embassy, led by the noble-minded Bishop Hallam of Salisbury, was accorded the place of honour. The learned and pious chancellor of the university of Paris, Gerson, was equally revered. It was expected that this international congress would restore peace and purity in the Church, a far greater object, then, than a cessation of war.

But, once assembled, the Roman party, organised by the cardinals, began to work for a particular result. The last thing which they desired was reform. They sought, indeed, the end of the schism, but that accomplished, they intended to have no interference in the courts, taxation, or despotism of the Roman hierarchy. The papal court no longer depended on the pope alone, but had become a complicated system, full of vested interests and worked for political and financial ends.

They therefore bent their energies, very skilfully, to persuade the Council to begin with attacking heresy, and by bringing about the trial and martyrdom of the great Bohemian reformer, John Hus, to fore-judge the reforming efforts of Hussites in Bohemia and Lollards in England. Next, the rival popes were deposed and a new pope chosen and unanimously acknowledged, and then the new pope, Martin V, with the whole Roman party, declared that further reform was the sphere of the pope alone, and succeeded in breaking up the Council.

It was a crushing blow to the hopes of reformers. The proposals of Hus and Wyclif had been summarily condemned without any reasons being shown; even the famous Gerson was so threatened that he had to hide in Germany. Henceforth there could be no hope of reform from the heads of the Church, and unless national indignation should rise to such heights as to make some revolution, men must accept the evils of the Church as part of her system. This had no good effect on religious life or thought: the devout tended more and more to keep aloof from practical life. Such holy men and women as Canon Walter Hylton of Thurgarton, or the recluse Juliana of Norwich, exercised through their writings or counsel great influence, both on fellow mystics and on other devoutly minded individuals, but they could do nothing towards an improvement of the general system of the Church. The Lollards, dismayed by the certainty that they would be cast out from the Church, or put to death, became less open and definite in teaching, yet their secret influence was at work in London, Bristol, Coventry, and other towns, and being driven underground, as it were, was possibly more harmful to reverence and piety than helpful in developing a deeper sense of religion.

The Council of Constance broke up in 1418. Thirty years later the most energetic of the English bishops, Pecock of Chichester, was devoting himself to the composition of books and tracts for popular use to combat the Lollard attacks on the churchmen. But the effect of the Council's forcible condemnation of "heresy" proved to be double-edged. It was actually unsafe to discuss or expound religious doctrine at all. The papal party discouraged thinking altogether and regarded Bishop Pecock as a dangerous man because he preached and wrote for the ordinary people. He was politically a Lancastrian, so that it was easy to get the Yorkist Mayor of London (Canynges of Bristol) to accuse him of heresy, and the champion of the papacy and of orthodoxy was thunderstruck to find himself declared a heretic, like Hus, without any investigation, and condemned to lifelong imprisonment in a monastery. The Londoners surged round the bonfire into which his writings were cast, and would gladly have thrown the bishop in with his books, but whether they hated him as a Lancastrian or as an anti-Lollard is not clear, perhaps for both reasons. From this time (1450) nothing more was attempted in England as to reform in the Church. Most bishops were busy with politics, like young George Neville, who was a mere specimen of feudalism though he was made archbishop of York, or they were busy public servants in the Treasury or Chancery, like Kemp and Waynflete, and became objects of almost as great unpopularity as abbots and priors.

Among the monastic houses of the south, the fifteenth century witnessed a general decline in power and wealth. They suffered from the rapacity of the nobles, who expected to be lodged comfortably without payment, and quartered old retainers as pensioners on the houses. To obtain protection or favour many gifts had to be bestowed, and advowsons of churches were actually given to courtiers, who named vicars with little regard to fitness, and frequently changed them. The abbeys were usually in straits for money, as expenses increased and offerings diminished, and to get it had recourse to ruinous methods of farming out tithes, to save the cost of collecting, giving long leases of their lands for a lump sum down and small annual payments. This was all to the advantage of the tenant and of the land, so that towards the close of the century many houses were deep in debt, while their tenants were rich, and, if they enclosed open lands, to make better pasture, or tried to exact higher rents and fees, their tenants were not afraid to cheat and threaten. Many houses took boarders, often for two lives, on a lump payment; a useful, but hardly a religious function, much like insurance.

The Church in the south of England was actually in a state of dependence upon the richer laity. It was not unusual for vicars to be obliged to act as secretaries and men of business for their patrons, in order to get a living, at all events in the commercial

eastern counties, but it is probable that in the west and the north there were happier conditions. The fifteenth century was an age of splendid church building and active parish life in the clothing district of Somerset, and north of the Trent the older monastic houses still remained real centres of religious life, while in the towns of the north, even more than elsewhere, the craftsmen still made it a part of their annual holiday to perform sacred "Miracle Plays."

These plays took a large share in the education of the people. By this time they had become too elaborate to be fitly produced in the church, and were represented out-of-doors, and the gilds and the crafts had long prided themselves on the magnificence and interest of their shows. Complete series of plays were composed, which for some three centuries (from the 13th to the 16th) were exhibited at the Whitsuntide or Corpus Christi festivals. From Norwich, Coventry, Dunstable, Chester, York, Beverley, Wakefield, Newcastle-on-Tyne, from the Cornish boroughs, the villages of Essex and the Cinque Ports, evidence survives which shows how the crafts produced their "Miracles." Mounted on a large movable stage, called a *pageant*, the players of each episode were drawn from place to place, at each acting their scene through. As one moved on another took its place, so that for the whole of five, or even seven, days, the dramas were being almost continuously given. A good deal of local allusion and even fun was dovetailed into the sacred story. Noah's shipbuilding gave scope for comments on the proper art of the shipwright, or the wives of the Bethlehem shepherds were introduced, quoting proverbs and making amusing byplay. Noah's wife became traditionally a comic character, and Herod a storming bully. Only a few sets of these plays have come down to us, but scores or hundreds must have been composed, and the seasons of their representation made the local holiday. It was this familiarity with scriptural drama which, in the Tudor age, gave birth to the great dramatic literature of England.

(B) Town Life

The fifteenth century is especially an epoch of town development. The Black Death actually stimulated commerce by making it difficult to observe the ancient rules of the gilds, so that the new workmen who came to town from the villages were freer than before from restrictions.

The joint effect of the foreign policy of Edward III, and of the introduction of the spinning-wheel, was seen immediately in the rapid progress of the weaving industry, which soon became, as it was for centuries to continue, the premier industry of England. The gilds which, from the twelfth century, had conducted the manufacture of cloth had in many towns before 1348 multiplied into several gilds or misteries, each occupied with one branch of the

industry. When the wool had been carded, combed and spun, the yarn was woven by the weavers, finished by the shearmen and taylors, fulled by the fullers (or walkers), dyed by the dyers (or lysters), and finally made up into bales and sold or exported by the drapers.

The cloth anciently made in England was usually thick and coarse, partly because the best wool was exported to the continent. But as early as 1258 the baronial government had commanded that wool should be worked up at home, though no steps were taken towards carrying out this vague order till Edward III endeavoured to transplant Flemish skill to our own towns. When the burghers of Ghent were crushed by the French king in 1328, partly from the failure of English help, the least Edward could do was to offer a refuge in England to any of his queen's countrymen who would undertake to pursue here their skilled crafts of cloth and silk weaving and teach English apprentices.

They came in some hundreds, and from time to time fresh groups arrived, protected by Edward III from the unfriendliness of the local inhabitants, who were suspicious of all aliens. Bristol craftsmen, anxious to keep a monopoly of work and wages, declared that it was a kind of slave trade to assign Flemings as hands to a master-weaver. The London mob massacred all they could lay hands on in 1381, just as, in 1456, they expelled the Italian traders wholesale, yet following the arrival of the skilled weavers, English looms began to produce, not only the rough cloths suitable for hard wear, but fine cloth and even "fancy" materials. Bristol "rays," or striped cloth, Lincoln green and Kendal green and Coventry friezes soon became famous, while by the middle of the fifteenth century the worsted of Norwich was "almost like silk." The principal seats of the cloth manufacture were: (1) Norfolk and the other eastern counties; (2) the south-western counties (Gloucester and Somerset, Dorset, Wilts and North Devon), but the other places named above, as well as London, Kent, York and Leicester were also seats of weaving. The increase in the importance of this trade can be seen from the increasing numbers of gilds, or, as they were now oftener called, crafts, or *misteries*. There were several kinds of undyed cloth, including a thin and bleached kind called Cotton, made either from wool or flax, and a thick and very warm kind called Blanket, a speciality of the Bristol neighbourhood.

The crafts were greatly concerned with keeping the knowledge and profit of their trade in their own hands, and the towns used to purchase royal charters confining certain trades to themselves, or forbidding the making or sale of this or that article for a distance of so many miles round. But there was plenty of ingenuity and energy, and these very restrictions often taught neighbours to vary the trade and make something different. Thus, the monopoly of Leicester had been the packing and sale of raw wool, which

might not be purchased there by "foreigners," *i. e.* outsiders (foreigners of beyond the realm were called aliens). These outsiders might only buy in certain villages, and thus Melton, Loughborough, Hinckley, Bosworth, Lutterworth and Breedon became flourishing little towns.

In much the same way did the restrictions of Norwich teach weaving-masters in the fourteenth century to set up towns in places beyond the city and its taxes, as, for example, in the Walsham and Worstead district. Doubtless hands could here be hired more easily than journeymen in Norwich or Lynn, for the looms would give employment to men whose families had agricultural property as well; and the town restriction forbidding any man to practise more than one process would not be in force, so that the additional work made for more prosperity.

The beginnings of a somewhat similar movement were visible in Essex before the close of the fourteenth century. Parts of Essex occupied the position of a rural commercial suburb of London. The very dialect of London to-day testifies to the close connection of the city with that county. In a number of villages, in 1377, there were groups of artisans of one trade; half-a-dozen smiths in one, in another as many tailors, in another shoemakers, in another carpenters. They must have worked for some London employer who had more sale for such goods—perhaps by export—than he could possibly supply on his own tiny London premises.

This marks the beginning of a class of merchants as distinct from the makers of the things sold. In the cloth business, they were known as *Clothiers*, capitalists who gave out wool to workmen to be combed, carded, spun, and woven, themselves overseeing the process and paying for the work. Such a man was the famous Thomas Blanket of Bristol (c. 1339), who set up a number of looms in his own house, as a kind of small factory, and collected yarn from the country round about. The gilds of Bristol long tried to limit the number of looms one man might employ, but failed. Coventry embraced the freer policy of allowing every master-weaver to have as many looms and apprentices as he liked (1424). Such large employers may properly be called capitalists, and certainly depended chiefly on the export trade. It became their custom to buy the wool from the graziers (or owners of flocks) and give it out to the spinners, a very humble class of worker, paying a fixed rate per spindle; then to distribute the yarn again to the looms. It was a frequent complaint of the spinners that their masters "sweated" them (as it would now be called), by giving more wool for each spindle than was fair. The mayor and corporation of Coventry again and again decreed that $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. was the outside weight which should be given.

The export of cloth of all kinds, whether dyed black or blue, as of old, or green, which was more expensive, or other colours, was made at first to the staple ports abroad. Bruges, which was

the staple port for wool, was most unfriendly to the English cloth merchants, who were, of course, rivals to the natives, and the principal exporters therefore betook themselves to Antwerp. The exporters banded together in a society called the Merchant Adventurers, and their ships soon found their way to other than Flemish ports, especially after the rupture of the Anglo-Burgundian (*i. e.* Fleming) alliance in 1435. Southampton made its fortune chiefly by the export and import trade with Italy, and became after 1456 the great centre of the Italian merchants. Ships which took out our cloth brought back silk and other articles of luxury, which accounts for the large number of wealthy *mercers* in the greater towns (*e. g.* London, Bristol, Coventry and Leicester), and for the preference of young fashionables for silk attire. The retail trade in London was in the hands of women, who made up goods themselves in London, and the shop of " my silk-woman " became the meeting-place of fashionable gossips.

With the expansion of trade the envious seeking for a monopoly came to be tempered by a wider interest. Exporters wanted both open markets and large supplies, and towns began to find friendship with their neighbours an advantage. Southampton had early made toll agreements with Winchester and Salisbury (1265, 1330). Bristol, Gloucester and Bridgwater, the ports of the western clothiers who looked to South Wales and Ireland, had similar agreements with Cardiff, Cork, or Youghal. In the fifteenth century the three towns of Nottingham, Coventry and Lincoln made a kind of union, while the Severn towns, from Shrewsbury to Bristol, formed a league for managing the river traffic, and pooled all their tolls into one payment which should frank any boat through " except the toll of Gloucester Bridge." Bristol was a specially adventurous city and seems to have colonised Bridport, as London colonised Rye (1448), after the French had destroyed them. But the English towns were never obliged to make political leagues as those of Italy and Germany had to do, because they had their representation in parliament, and the political conditions of England were never so bad as in Italy and Germany.

With the commercial growth of the towns their government also developed on capitalist lines. They became more and more self-governing, but now the ruling body was invariably composed only of the wealthiest class. It was this which had caused the riots in Norwich, Scarborough, York, Bridgwater, and other places in 1381. And it often happened that, as some crafts were more flourishing than others, a quarrel between rich and poor became identified with a trade rivalry.

This was the case in London in the time of Richard II, when for twenty years the city was torn by the feud between the clothing trades, led by the mercers, and the victualling trades, led by the grocers and fishmongers. The former were the party of John

of Gaunt, and sought to get popular support by protecting the Lollards and stirring up the mob against prelates, aliens, and other unpopular characters. The other, and more aristocratic, party largely depended on foreign commerce, being importers, and they were also the party of Richard II. To their ranks belonged the patriotic Philipot and Walworth. After 1381 the feud between the two parties more than once provoked insurrection. Richard II imprisoned and ruined the mercers' leader, John of Northampton, but was persuaded by Queen Anne not to execute him. He was the favourite of the mob, and in 1388 he turned the tables and got his rival Brambre executed. To secure peace it was at last proclaimed in the city that no man should speak aloud his opinion about either of them. The conflicting efforts of the two sides are reflected in the contradictory orders issued by Richard II's Council (in the young king's name) in 1381 and later, when one decree forbade any exporting except in English ships (our first Navigation Act), while another gave permission to foreign merchants to export what goods they liked. Richard II, as his later decrees showed, was anxious to encourage English shipping and English merchants, as wisely as he wished to make peace with France and to subdue Ireland, but he lacked that support among the trading classes and the Londoners which alone could have enabled him to carry out his policy.

Quarrels between crafts and classes were oftenest caused by the discontent of the large numbers of hired hands, or *journeymen*. These were the skilled workmen who were to the employers what the free-labourers were to the manor lords, and at times when export was slack they were often discharged, or had to work for less wages. Apprentices had a different standing. In the weaving and other skilled trades it was usual for a master to secure permanent help by taking a lad into his family altogether. The boy was bound to his master for seven years; he got no wages until his last year, but he was treated like a son, found in clothes and food, and sometimes in pocket-money, and as he was taught everything he became a confidential servant and very often in the end a partner. In London, especially, perhaps because the city was not very healthy for children, masters relied on apprentices to carry on their businesses. There were so many that for several centuries they were a force to be reckoned with. They had their own societies and code of conduct, and the cry of "Caps, caps!" would bring a crowd of them into the streets to take up the cause of a comrade. They formed, as it were, a stream of colonists continually replenishing the population from the country, and certainly a London apprentice had his foot on the ladder of ambition. Few of the mayors of London have been Londoners born, as, to this day, the country towns of England bear witness, by the number of schools or almshouses founded by mayors and aldermen of London to benefit their native places.

The precise form of civic government differed slightly in different towns. But in all there was a Head, usually called the mayor, and a council of citizens, or sometimes two councils, a higher and lower; twenty-four was a frequent number, sometimes there might be twelve in the higher and twenty-four in the lower body. York even had three bodies, a twelve, a twenty-four and a forty-eight. Nominally the councils were elected, but the electors were a small privileged number, usually of the richer citizens; perhaps the gild merchant, or the heads (aldermen) of the principal gilds.

The mayor and town council had a great deal of responsibility—

(*a*) They had to keep order; a riot was sure to call down the anger of the king. In London the "liberties" (*i. e.* of self-government) were more than once "taken into the king's hand," that is, royal officers administered the law and kept up some kind of police, because the city had been too disorderly.

(*b*) They had to keep the law-courts and know enough of the law of the land and the customs of the town to do so. The local custom was, after the epoch of Edward I, much altered by the new statutes, and sometimes the townsmen would prefer a new plan to an old one. It is recorded that both Leicester and Nottingham had long preserved the archaic custom of inheritance by the youngest son (called Borough English), but that the Norman-French settlers used succession by the eldest son, and that this was at last adopted by the citizens. Probably the ancient rule accounts for the youngest son being usually the hero in the old fairy tales.

(*c*) They had to administer the trade regulations, and especially *Assize of bread and beer:* that is, to see that those articles were made unadulterated and sold at certain fixed prices, as well as to supervise nearly all the other trades. If the bakers and brewers dealt unfairly they should be put in the pillory for the mob to throw stones at; but in practice they usually got off with a fine, if they were not let off altogether. The truth was, that the low prices fixed by the towns hardly allowed any profit, except by cheating, and the authorities winked at bad practices, aware of their own similar failings.

(*d*) They had to collect the subsidies, when voted by parliament, and the regular annual payment made as the town *farm*, either to the king or to the manor lord who had inherited the ancient suzerainty. In the days of civil war this might mean paying to both sides in turn, and often brought imprisonment or ruin upon the unlucky mayor. In London, during the long periods of danger from French pirates, the mayor and principal citizens had even to provide against raids. Thus in 1370 a hundred armed men were on guard nightly from the Tower to Billingsgate, mostly archers, furnished by the greater crafts in turn: Tuesdays, the drapers and tailors; Wednesdays, the mercers and apothecaries; Thursdays, the fishmongers and butchers, etc. Southampton tried to defend

itself on the same plan, but found the task so heavy that, when royal orders came to keep better watch, the inhabitants preferred to run away into the woods.

If, however, a hard-worked mayor and his assistant counsellors gave up the effort to be for ever coercing vested interests, there was no power able to compel them to work. For years after 1381 riots kept breaking out in one or other town, clearly because authority was weak, while the idea of prices and quality controlled by the mayor and council for the public good became even more mythical than the enforcement of the statutory wage among workmen.

In Nottingham, for instance, which was a town not of one great industry, but of many small ones—from tanning to mustard-making—the *jury* which had to draw up and present a list of the crimes and criminals in their town for the Judges of Assize to try, presented, in 1395, that *all* the brewers, butchers, bakers, fishers, taverners, poulterers, cooks and hostelers, and *all* the shoemakers, weavers, fullers and dyers, habitually "broke the assize." They all sold bad goods, and too dear, and "forestalled" the market (*i. e.* bought up wholesale to sell retail at a high price). The cooks, for instance, sold raw food, which was the butchers' business, and warmed up old dishes and pretended they were fresh; the poulterers (who were all women) sold goods of all kinds—flour, garlic, salt, butter and cheese, and tallow candles, and all these things they made too dear, especially as the candles often had no "cotton," or wicks; while the shoemakers sold calfskin for ox-leather, and so forth. Further, the jury declared that *everybody* threw rubbish into the watercourses, or the open spaces, or into their neighbours' yards, and used the public streets for stacking timber or tanning leather. Evidently Nottingham was badly overcrowded, and Mr. Mayor had given up the hopeless task of enforcing old rules. But similar accusations against the whole of a trade become increasingly noticeable in many towns in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the explanation being that competition was now practically free and that consumers had to take care of themselves. In other words, the gild regulations had long since become impossible to enforce, and the medieval ideal of a commerce regulated by law for fairness, and not for profit, was being dropped.

Only second to the cloth industry came the fishing industry, and the east coast towns which supplied the nation with herring—fresh, dried or salted—and with other salt-water fish, were in their prime during the fifteenth century: Whitby, Hull, Boston, Lynn, Yarmouth and Lowestoft, as well as Bristol, were the chief.

English salt was not so good as that made on the Breton coast, and a considerable trade was done in fetching this "Bay salt" as it was called. Even so, our method of preserving the fish was less good than that of the Hollanders, who used to buy up English catches to add to their own for the Mediterranean trade. Herring

was a very important article of food in those hungry ages, especially during the periods of fasting, then universally observed.

Richard II attempted to forbid the foreign purchase of our fish, and to transfer some of the oversea commerce to English ships, but he was unable to carry out the scheme. English fishing-boats were not fit for long voyages, and the Cinque Ports were too much exhausted by the war to provide the tonnage. The best thing he did was to encourage the Merchant Adventurers, formed by the three London misteries of Grocers, Drapers and Mercers, to trade, on joint-stock principles, with the nearer continental ports. They did not, as yet, venture beyond a line from Sluys to the Danish Skaw, but they provided the germ of English commercial expansion later. Their trade was in almost everything except wool; this was still left to the older company of Merchants of the Staple, the Staple for wool always remaining at Calais.

This failure of England to maintain the control of the sea, which she still claimed, was remedied for a short time under Henry V, only to be again noticeable after his death. The result was to leave the greatest profit out of our export trade to be reaped by the German commercial and naval league of the Hanse Towns, the *Easterlings* as the English called them, or, sometimes, the *Dutch*. Just as *Fleming* included Brabanters and Hollanders, so *Dutch*, or *Low-Dutch*, meant the people of all the Teutonic seaboard from Frisia to Prussia, but especially the merchants of Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck.

Although they were unpopular in this country, the Hanse merchants were able, from the thirteenth century till the sixteenth, to keep a masterful grip upon much of our commerce and finance, because they usually had an understanding with the Crown. As has been already explained, the overwhelming need of enterprising sovereigns for capital sums of money compelled them to get loans and gifts from capitalists in return for commercial charters and similar favours. The visible sign of this in London was the strong fortified settlement of the Hanse merchants called the Steelyard, a place not unlike those factories which, in the seventeenth century, our ancestors established in India.

Edward III was deeply indebted to the Hanse League during the latter half of his reign. He had left Cologne deep in debt but the Hanse of the Baltic towns (who often were in rivalry with the Rhine city) redeemed his crown and jewels for him and handed them over in return for commercial privileges of a most profitable kind. They got a lease of the Cornish tin-mines—to the loss of the Black Prince and the local merchants—and the whole customs duties of several of the richest ports.

A slighter instance of their exceptional position was a licence to sell on their premises in retail the wine which they imported, so that it became a fashionable pastime to visit the Steelyard to drink Rhine wine, and, only too probably, to indulge in other vices, for

the Steelyard was exempt from the mayor's jurisdiction. In vain did the taverners and innkeepers protest, and the populace clamour against the licensed vice of Germans and Flemings. Henry IV and his House inherited the poverty and the policy of Edward III, and dared not restrain the Hanse merchants. There was a continual agitation among English merchants and political writers to cancel these privileges unless the German towns would allow equal privileges to English traders. But from Bremen to Riga the Hanse League kept English ships out of the harbours, or flung English sailors and traders into horrible prisons, and even if, by some occasional treaty, they got a grudging permission to land, it was to find themselves hampered by all manner of old-fashioned restrictions long since given up in England and France. The Hanse League even employed the worst Baltic pirate-gang to destroy the English settlement in friendly Norway, and so ruined both Bergen and Lynn by one foul blow.

So long as England was without a fleet and her sovereign without an adequate revenue these conditions could hardly be altered. The cry of Chaucer's merchant who—

> "Would the sea were kept, for anything,
> Betwixte Middleburgh and Orwell"

was still being vainly repeated in the days of Henry VI—

> "Cherish merchandise, keep th' admiralty
> That we be masters of the Narrow sea"

urged the writer of the famous *Libel* (booklet) *of English Policy*. His idea was, that there would be general peace if an English navy could impose peace upon the ocean. But the conception was beyond the power of the distracted England of the fifteenth century to carry out.

From this ballad we gather that the Bretons had now displaced the Normans as the pirates of the Channel; that the Flemings were held dangerous rivals and the partners of the Germans, and were sustained against us by Spain and Scotland; that Portugal was the most friendly country; that the Genoese brought the best Eastern goods, Venice and Florence only articles of luxury which the poet thought we should do better without. The ballad also tells us that the fairs of Zeeland, Brabant and Calais were the principal centres of trade, and that, if only we "kept the sea" we should derive thence a profit (partly by tolls) which other nations were drawing out of our pockets; that Scarborough was a declining port and no longer sent ships to "the cold coasts," whereas Bristol sent out so many fishing-boats to Iceland, "by needle and by stone" (*i. e.* the mariners' compass) that they could hardly all get freighted. Though Londoners knew East Anglia better than

Somerset and Devon, the latter were the more advanced, whether in manufactures, seafaring, or the building arts. Yarmouth was a century behind Bridgwater in its port arrangements. The South-West was getting ready for the great expansion in the sixteenth century, and Bristol skippers wanted to explore the Atlantic.

Vicissitude seems to be of the essence of the fifteenth century. Town life, if it offered more opportunity of growing rich than did country life, was no longer safe. Few towns remained prosperous for a whole generation, unless perhaps Bristol, which was secured by its admirable position from most of the dangers which menaced the other ports. War, piracy, civil war, fire, pestilence or riots ravaged every port from Hull to Melcombe, at least once between 1348 and 1485; many suffered more than once, and the continual struggle wore out the strength of the Cinque Ports, which by the accession of Henry VII had become superseded by Bristol and Southampton.

Nevertheless, it would be unfair to the closing century of the Middle Ages to regard it as an age of gloom. Recovery was usually rapid, and if one town decayed, another rose: when Southampton lay desolate Bridport was flourishing; Scarborough declined, but Whitby developed; Lynn decayed, but Boston and Hull grew. The inland towns were not always in the throes of civil commotion, and the wealth which was won by the leading townsmen was often spent in ways which practically shared it among the whole population—sometimes in a school foundation, sometimes on a Market House or Butter Cross, or a conduit for a water-supply, or in gifts to endow the Church. In the richest districts they rebuilt most of the churches. The new style of building which came into fashion before the close of the fourteenth century, called the *Perpendicular* style, was a native English style. It aimed at providing space for large companies of people, whether in churches, castles, or the gild-halls, town-halls and market buildings of which a few still remain.

These buildings tend towards a square shape, with ample doors and windows; the windows are built wide with straight, tall mullions dividing the lights, and a stiff and conventional arching to contain the whole. Less artistic skill was required from the individual mason than had been the case in the earlier *pointed* style, for the beauty and distinction of the building were now provided by the splendid coloured glass which filled the windows. The stonework was, in fact, a frame for the glorious pictures in the windows, of which, unhappily, but very few fragments now remain. The churches built in that age were not then the cold, dull buildings which they often appear to be now, and the Somerset churches, especially, prove that expert carvers still could be found.

Whether in the churches or in their own houses and their dress, people showed a great love of colour. The painted glass manufacture was a new one, developed after the Black Death, and so

was the working of embroidered or tapestry cloths, or Arras, and of banners, and hose of fine, bright-coloured cloth. People hung their parlours and their best beds with these rich cloths; the well-to-do dressed handsomely, and mayors and aldermen prided themselves on their fur or scarlet, their gold chains, maces and the city plate.

In the same way, wood-work was usually carved, and the metal work of keys and locks and hinges, of lanterns or railings was wrought into patterns. Almost every handicraft by which things were made was a fine art.

Mention has already been made of the elaborate dramatic shows given by the crafts and misteries. Men had plenty of holidays and they enjoyed them by making merry together. At Michaelmas and Martinmas harvest and brewing gave good reason for mirth; Christmas feasting lasted till after Twelfth Night, Midsummer had its dancing and bonfires in the country: but of all the festivals that of the First of May was the most joyous. In town or country it was the feast of the open air. Young folk went early to the fields to gather flowers and "brought home the May." Into London came processions of carts from the woods, laden with green or flowering boughs, which the householders bought to dress up the fronts of their houses so that the streets looked like avenues; the great Maypole by St. Andrew Undershaft was set up, and the dancers, often dressed up in character, sang, acted and danced in every open place.

There were, also, holidays on saints' days, almost too many for the working men, and the festival day of the church was a special feast day in every village.

It is clear that the towns found their chief interest, naturally, in commerce and pleasure. They held aloof from politics and war as much as possible. There was little in the rivalry of Lancaster and York to stir general feeling, and it was Warwick's naval successes which won popularity for him. It may have been this popularity, or it may have been fear of the northern troops, or a desperate wish to end the war, which in 1461 caused the unusual appearance of contingents from several towns among the troops which fought at Towton for Edward IV: Bristol, Coventry, Gloucester, Canterbury and others sent their companies forth under their several town banners. But in the later commotions the towns remained inactive while Margaret and Edward in 1471 marched through the counties on the way to Tewkesbury; when Richard III deposed his nephew, and when the duke of Buckingham tried to raise rebellion. Most curious appears their apathy in 1485. Richard was encamped at Leicester for months; Henry of Richmond marched for weeks, through Wales and Central England, and no movement, in shires or towns, gave a hint of sympathy for either. There was no national support for any political party, so far separated from the nation had the Crown and the government become. Had such an idea been then known, England might have

been republican for all the concern she showed. Evidently it would be a hard undertaking to create anew a feeling of loyalty. "Good governance," from 1376 till 1485, had been the demand of the nation. But "good governance" they had never obtained from any of the political and dynastic changes of that long period. It is this which explains the success of the Tudors and the national support which, as a rule, they enjoyed.

But it ought to be recognised that the rapid steps forward made by the nation under the early Tudors were prepared by the general spread of knowledge which is the characteristic of the fifteenth century: that the printing-press was busy in London and Oxford under Edward IV, the post so busily employed that government tried to monopolise it under Richard III, and that the scholars who were to teach Oxford under Henry VII were studying in Italy before Bosworth.

XL

THE END OF THE FEUDAL AGE

(i) The Crown and the Barons: (6) 1483–1485

On the death of Edward IV, Richard III found no difficulty in mounting the throne. The minority of a child-king was desired in no quarter, nor did any one expect an example of self-sacrificing loyalty to country and family such as John, duke of Bedford, had set during the childhood of Henry VI. There was little public feeling except a yearning to be spared more civil war, so shallow was the popularity which the late king had won, and so vain his idea that London might protect his family, as Ghent really protected the grandchildren of Charles the Bold.

Richard knew that he could count upon the personal spites of the principal nobles to counteract each other. The jealousy of Hastings made him acquiesce in the seizure and execution of all the Woodville leaders who could be trapped—Lord Rivers and Lord Richard Grey. Next, the jealousy and greed of the splendid duke of Buckingham (descendant of Thomas, duke of Gloucester), led him to help in the destruction of Hastings. Self-interest and party feeling led Archbishop Bourchier to persuade the foolish widowed queen to give up to his uncle her second son, Richard, called duke of York and Norfolk, though she herself with her daughters remained in the comparative safety of the sanctuary of Westminster Abbey; self-interest and the knowledge that he, alone, was the necessary and trusted supporter of Richard, secured to him Sir John Howard, who was rewarded by the great position of duke of Norfolk. The two royal boys were hidden away in the Tower, and never were seen alive again. It was a fate which had befallen several persons under Edward IV, including Henry VI and the duke of Clarence. The archbishop caused public sermons to be preached expounding to the people that Richard had a better title to the crown than the children of "this pretended marriage," an unwarrantable slight which Richard had used already. The lord mayor and aldermen, anxious to be on the winning side, then petitioned the duke of Gloucester to assume the crown, and Richard graciously consented and was crowned as Richard III. The recent usurpation of Edward IV and the murders of Richard II, Henry VI and his son had almost destroyed the age-long conception of the sanctity of hereditary succession.

What the people at large really wanted was an end of violence and an orderly conduct of life by the proper machinery of law-courts uncoerced and parliaments not packed. Above all, they desired cessation of taxation. Of this Richard endeavoured to assure them, by permitting his first parliament to make a statute declaring the exaction of benevolences illegal (1484), and by going on a grand progress through England, when, at every town, he declined the gifts of money with which the anxious corporations sought to purchase his favour, as they had so often had to do during past years. He would rather have their hearts than their money, he told them; and by granting local favours here and there he tried to win popularity, especially in Yorkshire. He had placed Clarence's young son, titular earl of Warwick, and the daughters of Edward IV in custody in his great castle of Middleham, once the palace of the Neville earl of Salisbury. Only one possible young Pretender had still avoided his clutches, and for his surrender the king was negotiating—Henry Tudor, titular earl of Richmond.

Henry, son of the Lady Margaret Beaufort and Edmund Tudor, Henry VI's half-brother, was the last left scion of the whole Lancastrian race. His uncle, Jasper Tudor, had carefully guarded him during the civil wars and found him at last a refuge in Brittany. When Richard began to treat for his surrender, Henry was forced to some desperate adventure.

Richard III was the more anxious because the hand of the Lady Margaret, which conveyed such great wealth, had been secured, as a reward, by the Lord Stanley of south Lancashire. This family had risen to power and wealth by the astuteness which had ranged them always on the winning side, from 1399 to 1485. Richard II permitted them to build a fortress in Liverpool; Henry IV gave them the Isle of Man; Henry VI conferred the peerage. Lord Stanley secured a Neville as his first wife, and by deserting Warwick in 1471 he earned his second magnificent marriage.

The Lady Margaret seems to have been a tactful and determined woman; it was difficult to trace her correspondence with her son. But when Buckingham began to intrigue she found it easy to turn his nervousness to Henry's profit. Like former king-makers, Buckingham was both insatiable and profoundly suspicious of the king he had made. He had the custody of an able ecclesiastical lawyer, named Morton, a Lancastrian who had submitted to Edward IV after Tewkesbury and served him so honestly that Edward had made him bishop of Ely; and Richard, after jesting with him on his Holborn strawberries, had arrested him because of his support of Edward V.

When Buckingham confided his suspicions to Morton, the bishop skilfully drew him into a plot to bring Henry Tudor to England as king. Buckingham's rising was, however, a failure because a great tempest and flood kept him west of the Severn till too late to join the levies who were ready to follow his banner. They dispersed,

the duke fled and was caught, and put to death by Richard, but Henry was warned off Plymouth in time to escape.

Bishop Morton's plans, however, were not destroyed by the fall of Buckingham, for the executions and murders by which Richard III had secured the Crown had alienated many influential families, who were ready to replace Richard by a wiser prince. Morton and the Lady Margaret arranged for a union of the two rival houses by the marriage of Henry Tudor with Edward's daughter, Princess Elizabeth. This would prevent general vengeance and isolate Richard as the sole enemy. When, a few months later, Richard's only son died suddenly, the opportunity seemed near. Richard dared not recognise as his heir any child of either of his brothers, but declared John de la Pole, earl of Lincoln (son of his sister Elizabeth), his heir. He was said to intend divorcing his wife and marrying his own niece, Princess Elizabeth, and his actions and those of the fickle queen dowager supported the rumour. Such marriage had, indeed, been known in southern Europe, with papal permission, but the idea caused indignation in England, and when Queen Anne died men wondered if she, too, had not been murdered. Richard's effort to obtain papal favour by sending to offer the submission and tribute of John's time was little likely to do him good at home; finally, a visitation of the plague, called "the Sweating Sickness," broke out in the only district the king could believe loyal to him—Yorkshire.

Henry's invasion and Richard's defence were both hampered by their equal uncertainty of support, and by the determination of the principal magnates not to move till they could guess the winning side.

Each had one resolute supporter: Henry the earl of Oxford, Richard the new duke of Norfolk; and one irresolute: the earl of Northumberland was in Richard's army, while Henry hoped for the support of his stepfather Lord Stanley, who, with his brother Sir William, was in command of North Wales. Henry baffled Richard by landing at Milford Haven and winning over enough Welsh captains to cause the Yorkist Lord Herbert, at Pembroke, to hesitate in declaring himself, and to lead the Stanleys to be still ambiguous. Unopposed, Henry marched by the Severn route and Watling Street into the heart of England, where Richard at Nottingham was awaiting him. They moved to meet each other in Leicestershire, and the Stanleys brought their troops to the same point, near Market Bosworth, but stood aloof. Oxford and Norfolk engaged, and Richard and Henry; Stanley and Northumberland both waited and watched. When Sir William Stanley made up his mind and marched to support Henry the day was decided. Richard and Norfolk fell fighting, Northumberland surrendered, and Sir William Stanley set the dead king's crown upon Richmond's head. Then Henry led his victorious troops into Leicester, an old Lancastrian seat, and thence to London.

Though the Crown had once more been won on the field of battle,

an unusual clemency was displayed, which indicated happily to the nation that the feudal wars of greed and revenge were at last over.

(ii) Testimony of the Paston Letters

There exists a most interesting record of the life of a well-to-do family in Norfolk during the fifteenth century, in the *Paston Letters*, which are the correspondence of three generations from the time of Henry V to that of Henry VII. The great-grandfather is described as having lived in the little village of Paston by the coast, a good "husband" (or peasant), who tilled his ground himself, and used to ride to the local mill carrying his sack of corn before him. But he had some means, and was apparently a free man, for his son studied the law to such good purpose that he became a judge, notable for his justice and prudence, the adviser of half the squires round about, and married the heiress of a considerable landed property.

The judge seems to have been of good service to one of his clients, the squire of Mautby, near Yarmouth, for when this gentleman was taken prisoner in France, he was ransomed by the wealthy man of the district, Sir John Fastolfe, who was a kinsman of the judge's wife, and the hero (or otherwise) of the Battle of Herrings. Mautby was so much in Sir John's debt that he never paid it all, but he recompensed the judge by making his daughter heiress of most of his property (some dozen manors), and marrying her to the judge's son, John Paston. The judge was rich enough to purchase for them the small castle of Gresham, near Sheringham, and when he died was in expectation that his son would become a really great man in Norfolk.

But this early prosperity aroused the greed of young Paston's neighbours, and he had to spend his life in law-suits. His enemies, having no right on their side, used force. Once a gang of robbers broke into Gresham when the master was away; his wife refused to yield, so they carried her out in her chair and set her on the green to watch them sawing and dragging down the timbers and setting the place on fire. At another time the retainers of the Howards crowded round Paston in a public hall, hustled him away from his neighbours and stabbed him so that, if he had not had a coat of mail beneath his robe, he must have been killed. A kinsman was set upon in the high road, shot by an arrow, tumbled from his horse and left for dead. Finally, the powerful duke of Suffolk (brother-in-law of Edward IV) declared that as some of the property which Paston had purchased, or inherited, from Sir John Fastolfe had once belonged to a local family named Pole, it should by rights be his own, though, as every port had its "pool," the name was a common one: but any excuse was enough for the powerful.

Both the dukes, and most of the Norfolk gentry, kept aloof from the fighting, keenly watching battles and parliaments to keep in

with the winning side. In the meantime, force was stronger than law.

John Paston's favourite home in 1460 was at the beautiful manor of Hellesdon, just outside Norwich, and as he was popular in the city he felt fairly safe there. The mayor and citizens habitually kept a force of from two to five hundred men armed and trained, and the mayor showed where their sympathies lay by inviting himself and the mayoress to dine with Mistress Paston in state The dinner was sent out from Norwich, presumably by boat, and the mayor assured his hostess that there was no gentleman in Norfolk for whom he would do more, if it lay in his power, than Paston. Such vague promises amounted to little. After the decisive battles of 1464 those lords who had taken the Yorkist side felt safe in acting exactly as the Lancastrian lords had done before, many of the gentry being no more than their obedient dogs, as Mistress Paston complains, and Suffolk, egged on by his mother—Alice Chaucer, a woman so unpopular that a parliamentary petition had been presented against her—got his will by a combination of fraud and force. John Paston was suddenly accused of being by descent "the king's villein," and was outlawed, which kept him either in sanctuary or in prison; while the duke's retainers seized Hellesdon by mere force.

First they pillaged the place, leaving not a sheet on a bed or a pot-hook in the kitchen; then they drove away the sheep (over 1500) and ransacked the church, even standing upon the altar to search the images. One of the servants had hidden in the church his best gown and his little purse of money, and in the steeple had been stored the weapons, including two hand-guns and a larger one, beside the usual bows and arrows, which must have represented a great loss, though nobody had ventured to use them. Next, they went round with carts to the parsonage and other houses in the village, and by threats extorted such goods as the neighbours had taken charge of when the Pastons had fled. Finally, the house was pulled to pieces, metal work and timbers carried away, and the remains tumbled into a mere heap of rubbish.

Paston, in the Fleet, could only set his lawyers and servants to work to make a fresh legal struggle. He had got the ear of the powerful Bishop Waynflete, and he suffered no personal hardships; any one with money could live in sanctuary or prison as he would in an inn; Paston entertained his friends and his wife came to stay with him, bringing much good cheer and making herself quite popular. But such places were terribly insanitary, and in a few months' time the poor man was dead, too soon to triumph in the announcement sent, as from the king, to the Bailiffs of Yarmouth that the Pastons had proved themselves "gentlemen descended lineally of worshipful blood since the Conquest hither."

His widow and sons continued for several years to make head against their enemies, the worst of whom was now the duke of

Norfolk, who meant to seize the new castle of Caister (by Yarmouth) which Fastolfe had built.

It was the property which the Paston family had inherited (under conditions) from wealthy Sir John Fastolfe which had roused the covetousness of two dukes, and that although the family were reckoned amongst the liveried retainers of the duke of Norfolk, John Paston, it seems, had shown insufficient obedience, especially in the matter of elections. The duchess once reminded this important retainer that the duke held it important to have men of his own *meyney* sitting in the Commons, and that independent voting was therefore not permissible.

Paston had, moreover, shown some ambition to be free of the duke's orders by placing his eldest son at the court of the king, Edward IV, who had promptly knighted him. The young man was possessed of more optimism than astuteness. He was for ever expecting to have some favour done for him by the king, or Lord Hastings, or Lord Scales, the queen's brother. He began courting a fashionable lady. His Uncle Clement, however (now a prosperous bachelor), thought him too ignorant of life to be able to achieve much in this way. His father used to keep him short of money and bring him home for long intervals, to economise; Uncle Clement considered that it was useless to send a lad into fashionable life unless he could ruffle it as his companions did, and he had supplied the young man with means, while he explained to the head of the family that the Court and the fashions of London were very different in the 'sixties from the soberer style of twenty years before.

Young Sir John well understood all this. His father's death enabled him to set up for a true courtier. He had a "great-horse," suitable for tournaments and pageantry, and tilted in the lists beside the king. He collected books and bought one or two "in print." He kept among his serving-men some who could play parts in mumming and act St. George or Robin Hood. If he came in the king's train into Norfolk, he told his brother, he must have twenty men to ride with him, and they and he must all wear the duke of Norfolk's parti-coloured livery.

But he got little satisfaction by his active and expensive currying of favour. It was the way of Edward IV to make use of willing courtiers rather than to reward them.

Sir John Paston had the expensive honour of going in the train of the Princess Margaret to Flanders to convoy her to her bridegroom, the famous Charles the Bold, and he and his brother, named like himself, John, immensely enjoyed their experiences. As they wrote to their mother, there were never Englishmen had so good cheer out of England. The marriage was performed at Damme, the port of Bruges, and from thence to Bruges the way lay through a series of pageants, the most magnificent ever seen or heard of. Lord Scales, as the flower of English chivalry, and the duke's brother Anthony, another very

famous cavalier, arranged a series of jousts, with twenty-five men on either side, all of them clad in silk and cloth of silver and gold, "for of such gear and gold and pearl and stones they of the duke's court, neither gentlemen nor gentlewomen, lack none: For without they have it by wishes, by my truth, I heard never of so great plenty as there is." As for the ducal court itself, lords and ladies, knights and squires: "I have no wit nor remembrance to write to you half the worship that is here . . . . I heard never of none like to it save King Arthur's court."

This was in 1468; the marriage exhibited Edward IV as the equal and ally of one of the most eminent princes of Europe, but his own throne was hardly steady. The revolts of the following year gave opportunity for the strong to rob at will, and while Warwick and Clarence were taking the king prisoner, the duke of Norfolk attacked the Pastons' castle at Caister by regular siege.

The younger John, with some of his cousins and friends, made a stout resistance, but they were short of arrows and gunpowder, while the duke's men battered the walls with gun-shot, so that while Sir John was getting letters of protection from Clarence, the defenders, having lost one of their leaders, were compelled to surrender. The duke was obliged to let them go away with life and honour—but (ironically enough) caused young Paston to be sued for murder, because one or two of the assailants had fallen. By the next turn of the political wheel, however, Clarence and Warwick placed Henry VI once more on the throne (1470), and the earl of Oxford, long in obscurity, became again a great man in Norfolk. The Norfolk duke, hereupon, played for safety by evacuating Caister, and the younger John Paston, one of Oxford's gentlemen, was able to get possession of the place. But the battle at Barnet, where John was fighting under Oxford's banner, undid this hopeful business; the duke of Norfolk put a garrison into Caister Castle once more, so that, though Lord Scales procured a royal pardon for the Pastons, they found themselves as at the beginning of the quarrel, the Norfolk household unwilling to sever all relations with them, though holding their castle, and Sir John Paston spending money to make friends at court. Suddenly the duke of Norfolk died (1476), he was the last of the Mowbrays, and Sir John Paston, startled into unwonted resolution, took a leaf from his enemy's book, and seized Caister himself. Possession proved indeed to be nine points of the law, for he was not ousted again, though it took some years to obtain the necessary legal decisions and pardons.

The letters interchanged by the two brothers John are almost as full of fun as of business. The younger, though he stayed in Norfolk as a rule, busy in setting manors to farm, selling the barley and oats, which were still the main crops of England north of the Thames; hiring shepherds, distraining cattle for rents, buying malt, selling timber, and freighting ships from Yarmouth, yet wished to keep up with the gay world, and often reminds his London brother to

send him new hats, silk laces for his hose, or a goshawk to ride out with. He thought a load of oats should pay for one hat. They exchanged books of romances, the latest gossip, the newest slang of Norwich, sent dainty presents to ladies, such as oranges; had fresh plate made, and were knowing about horses. They spent much consideration, and many years, in business-like courting on each other's behalf, the first step in such a process being to approach a parent or a trustee to see if the lands were safely settled, and give evidence of the position and security of the suitor. Both brothers were long unsuccessful, for the elder never knew his own mind, and the younger persisted in courting ladies much above his station. One was no less than an heiress of the wealthy Lord Mayor Boleyne, whose mother severely informed the negotiator that if her daughter and young Paston should " agree " she would not go so far as to forbid the match, " but I will never advise her thereto in no wise."

Properly-brought-up young ladies did not " agree " without their parents' consent, and Lady Boleyne held the property, so John Paston gave in.

It was a terrible blow to his family pride when his sister Margery summoned up courage to inform her mother that she had privately betrothed herself to the family steward, Richard Calle. Never, he cried, would he give his consent " for my sister to sell candle and mustard in Framlingham." The steward was an invaluable man, however, and the family could not do without him, so they visited their wrath upon Margery and applied to the bishop of Norwich, a personal friend, to dissolve the betrothal, for in those times the solemn pledge of marriage was a sacred vow. The bishop questioned the two young people separately, and Margery had the resolution to repeat to him the words of her promise and to add that " if those words made not sure she would make it surer ere she went thence, for she thought in her own conscience she was bound whatsoever the words were." Calle's tale was in entire agreement, and the bishop declared that betrothed to each other the two certainly were, nor could he dissolve their promises.

Hereupon Margery's mother refused to allow her to enter any of her houses, and begged all her acquaintance to refuse to see her, so that the bishop had to find her a lodging in a convent until a day for the marriage should be settled.

Margery does not seem ever to have been forgiven, but Calle, who had property of his own, remained steward for the rest of his days, and their children appear to have been forgiven.

The difficulties of the Pastons, like those of others, were slowly subsiding during the last ten years of Edward IV, while the younger brothers were being educated at Eton and Oxford, and got their first start in life by taking brief service at Calais under a nobleman. But the pestilence of 1479 exacted its toll. Sir John fell a victim to it in London, as did his Oxford brother, and his

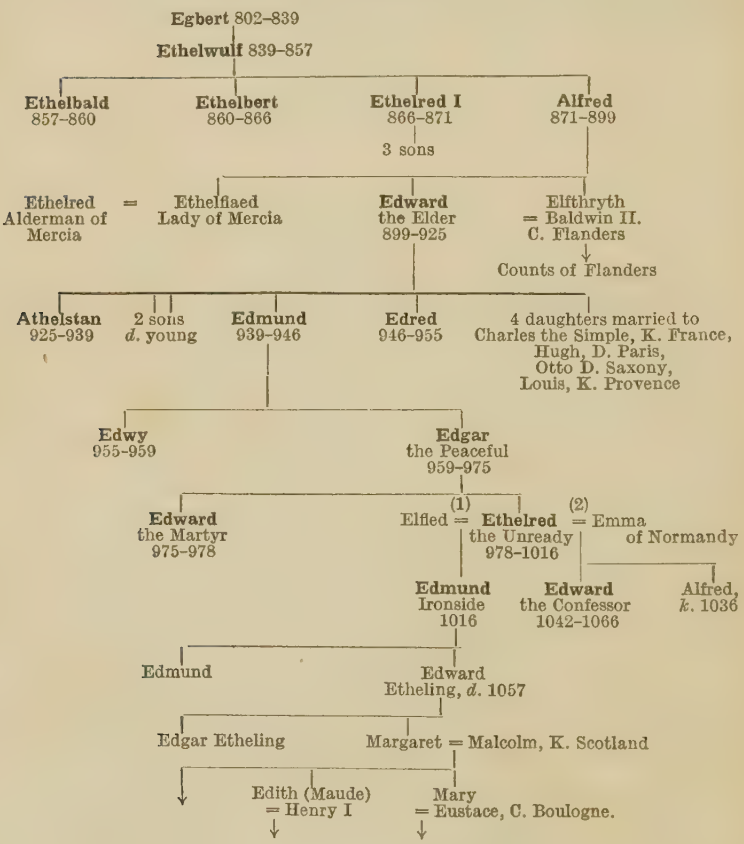
grandmother, the aged Dame Agnes, in Norfolk. The younger John survived to establish the family fortunes more securely than ever before, and, as a man favoured by the triumphant earl of Oxford, was very well regarded by the first Tudor monarch. We leave him a knight, some time sheriff of Suffolk, and the " right entirely beloved " of his earl, upon whom he must attend with his troop of men in livery to greet the new king in 1489. The gentry of the Eastern Counties were still suspicious, as well as rather jealous, of the north, and desirous that the new king and his new earl of Derby should see that in Norfolk " there be gentlemen of as great substance that they be able to buy all Lancashire."

K., King of
Bp., Bishop of
= married
. . . . . illegitimate

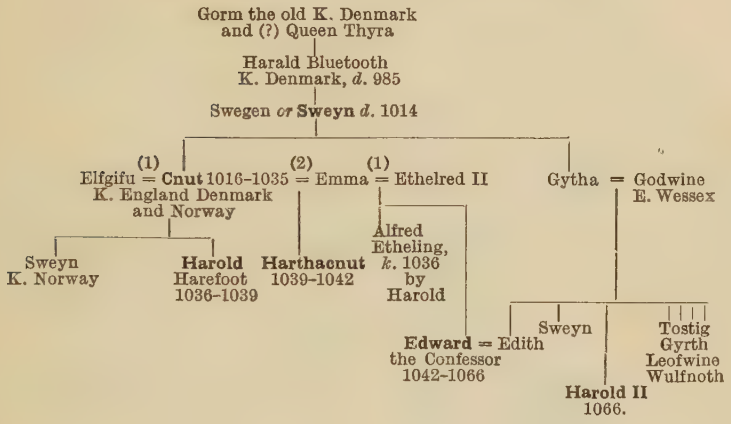
D., Duke of
Emp., Emperor
d., died
↓ descendants

E., Earl of
C., Count of
k., killed
ex., executed

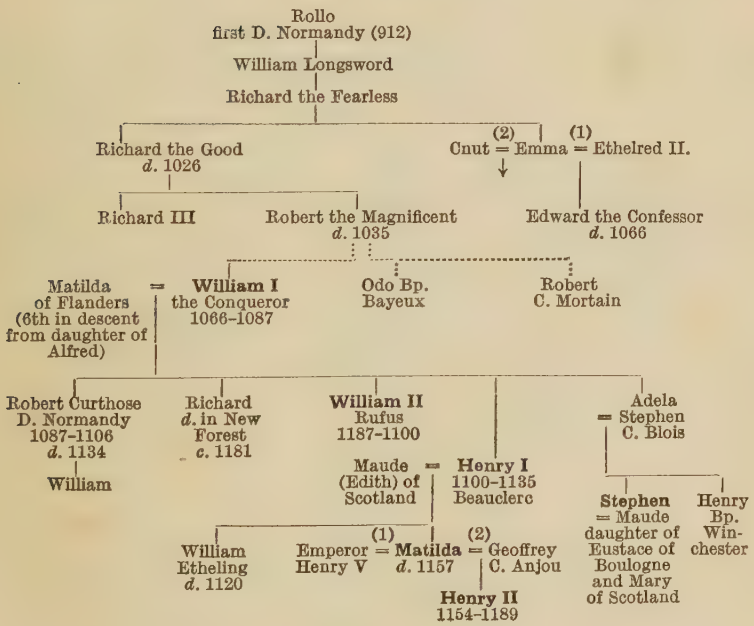
SAXON KINGS



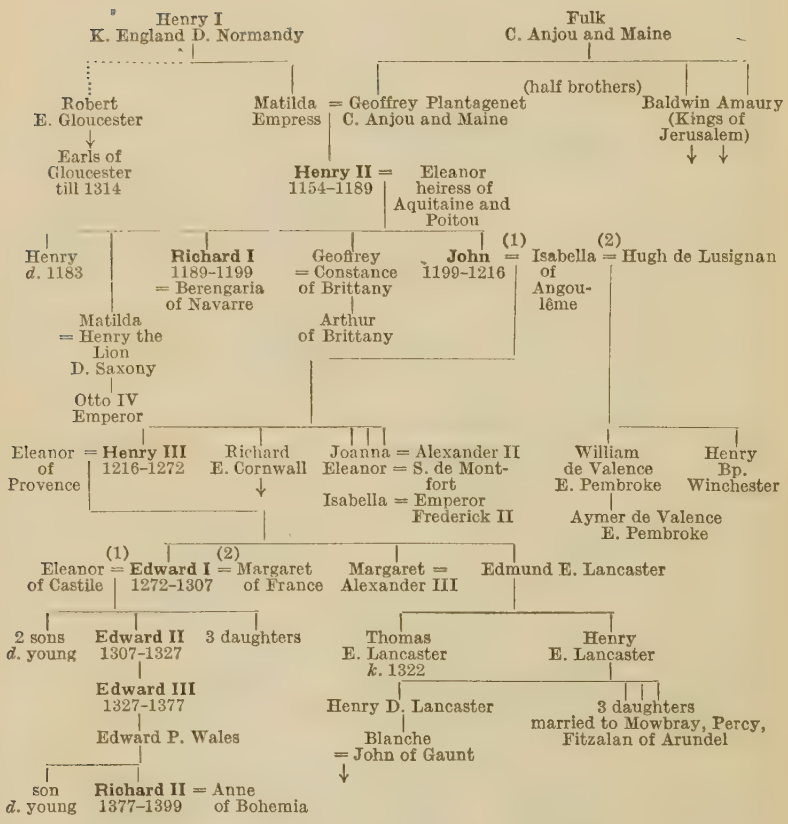
DANISH KINGS AND THEIR CONNECTIONS


Gorm the old K. Denmark and (?) Queen Thyra
Harald Bluetooth K. Denmark, d. 985
Swegen or Sweyn d. 1014
(1) Elfgifu = Cnut 1016–1035
(2) = Emma
(1) = Ethelred II
Gytha = Godwine E. Wessex
K. England Denmark and Norway
Sweyn K. Norway
Harold Harefoot 1036–1039
Harthacnut 1039–1042
Alfred Etheling, k. 1036 by Harold
Sweyn
Tostig Gyrth Leofwine Wulfnoth
Edward = Edith the Confessor 1042–1066
Harold II 1066.

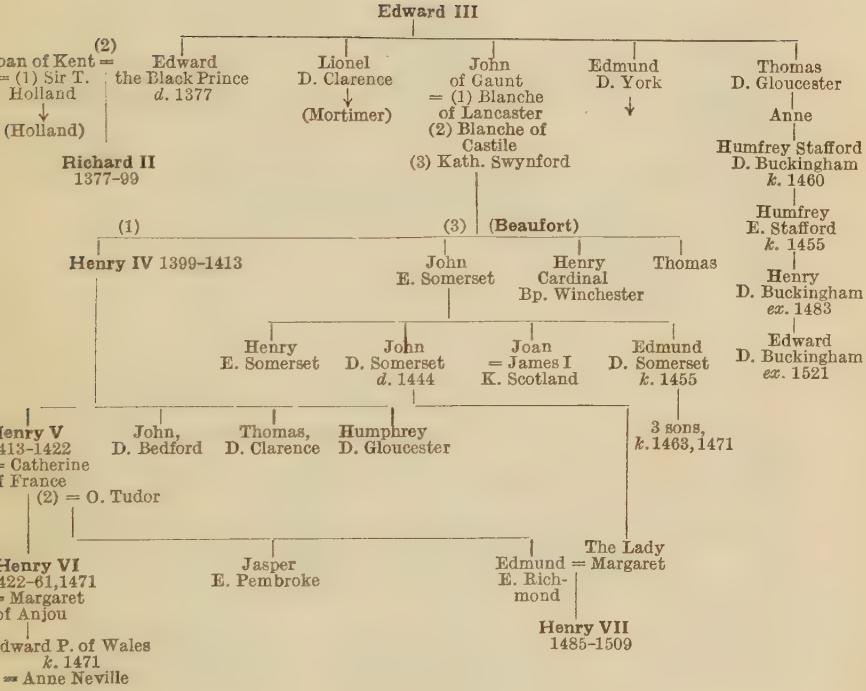
NORMAN DUKES AND KINGS


Rollo first D. Normandy (912)
William Longsword
Richard the Fearless
Richard the Good d. 1026
(2) Cnut = Emma
(1) = Ethelred II.
Richard III
Robert the Magnificent d. 1035
Edward the Confessor d. 1066
Matilda of Flanders (6th in descent from daughter of Alfred) =
William I the Conqueror 1066–1087
Odo Bp. Bayeux
Robert C. Mortain
Robert Curthose D. Normandy 1087–1106 d. 1134
William
Richard d. in New Forest c. 1181
William II Rufus 1187–1100
Maude (Edith) of Scotland =
Henry I 1100–1135 Beauclerc
Adela = Stephen C. Blois
Stephen = Maude daughter of Eustace of Boulogne and Mary of Scotland
Henry Bp. Winchester
William Etheling d. 1120
(1) Emperor Henry V =
Matilda d. 1157
(2) = Geoffrey C. Anjou
Henry II 1154–1189

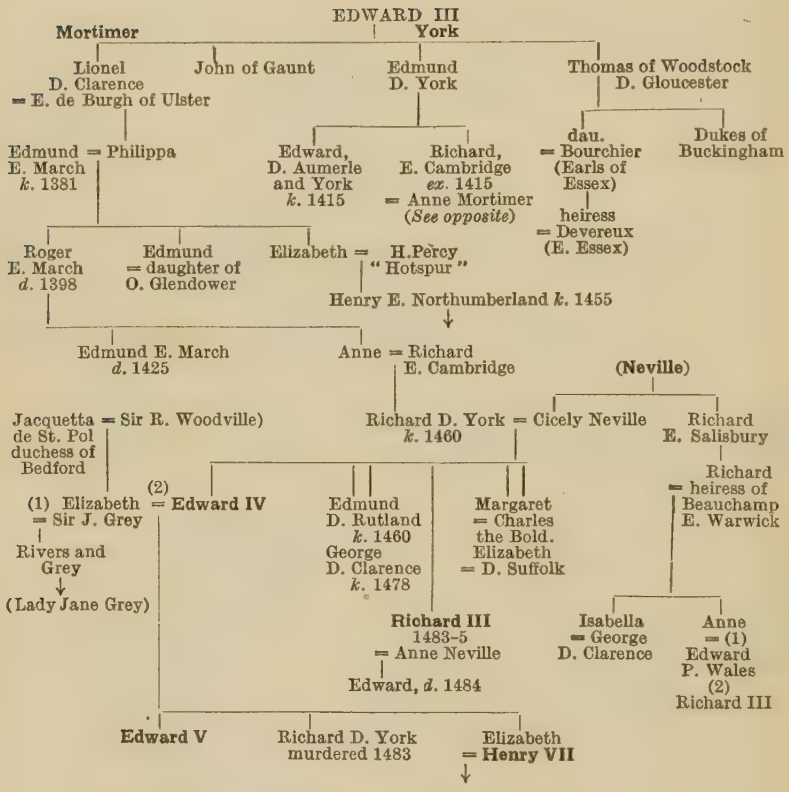
PLANTAGENET KINGS



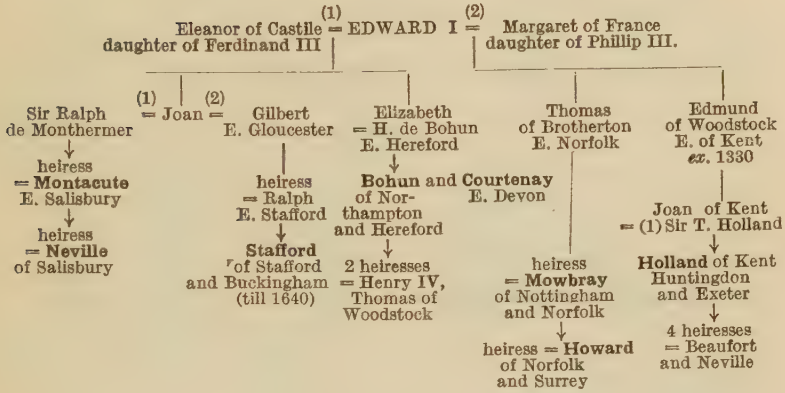
LANCASTER


Edward III
(2)
oan of Kent =
= (1) Sir T.
Holland
(Holland)
Edward
the Black Prince
d. 1377
Lionel
D. Clarence
(Mortimer)
John
of Gaunt
= (1) Blanche
of Lancaster
(2) Blanche of
Castile
(3) Kath. Swynford
Edmund
D. York
Thomas
D. Gloucester
Anne
Humfrey Stafford
D. Buckingham
k. 1460
Humfrey
E. Stafford
k. 1455
Henry
D. Buckingham
ex. 1483
Edward
D. Buckingham
ex. 1521
Richard II
1377–99
(1)
(3)
(Beaufort)
Henry IV 1399–1413
John
E. Somerset
Henry
Cardinal
Bp. Winchester
Thomas
Henry
E. Somerset
John
D. Somerset
d. 1444
Joan
= James I
K. Scotland
Edmund
D. Somerset
k. 1455
3 sons,
k. 1463, 1471
enry V
413–1422
= Catherine
f France
John,
D. Bedford
Thomas,
D. Clarence
Humphrey
D. Gloucester
(2) = O. Tudor
Henry VI
422–61, 1471
= Margaret
of Anjou
dward P. of Wales
k. 1471
= Anne Neville
Jasper
E. Pembroke
Edmund = Margaret
E. Rich-
mond
The Lady
Henry VII
1485–1509

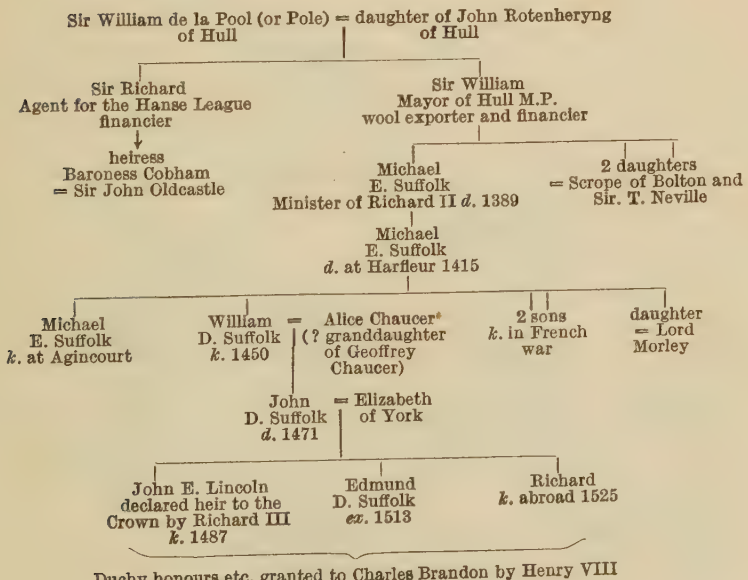
YORK


EDWARD III
Mortimer
York
Lionel D. Clarence = E. de Burgh of Ulster
John of Gaunt
Edmund D. York
Thomas of Woodstock D. Gloucester
Edmund = Philippa E. March k. 1381
Edward, D. Aumerle and York k. 1415
Richard, E. Cambridge ex. 1415 = Anne Mortimer (See opposite)
dau. = Bourchier (Earls of Essex)
Dukes of Buckingham
heiress = Devereux (E. Essex)
Roger E. March d. 1398
Edmund = daughter of O. Glendower
Elizabeth = H. Percy "Hotspur"
Henry E. Northumberland k. 1455
Edmund E. March d. 1425
Anne = Richard E. Cambridge
(Neville)
Jacquetta = Sir R. Woodville) de St. Pol duchess of Bedford
Richard D. York = Cicely Neville k. 1460
Richard E. Salisbury
Richard = heiress of Beauchamp E. Warwick
(1) Elizabeth = Sir J. Grey
(2) = Edward IV
Edmund D. Rutland k. 1460
George D. Clarence k. 1478
Margaret = Charles the Bold.
Elizabeth = D. Suffolk
Rivers and Grey
(Lady Jane Grey)
Richard III 1483-5 = Anne Neville
Edward, d. 1484
Isabella = George D. Clarence
Anne = (1) Edward P. Wales (2) Richard III
Edward V
Richard D. York murdered 1483
Elizabeth = Henry VII

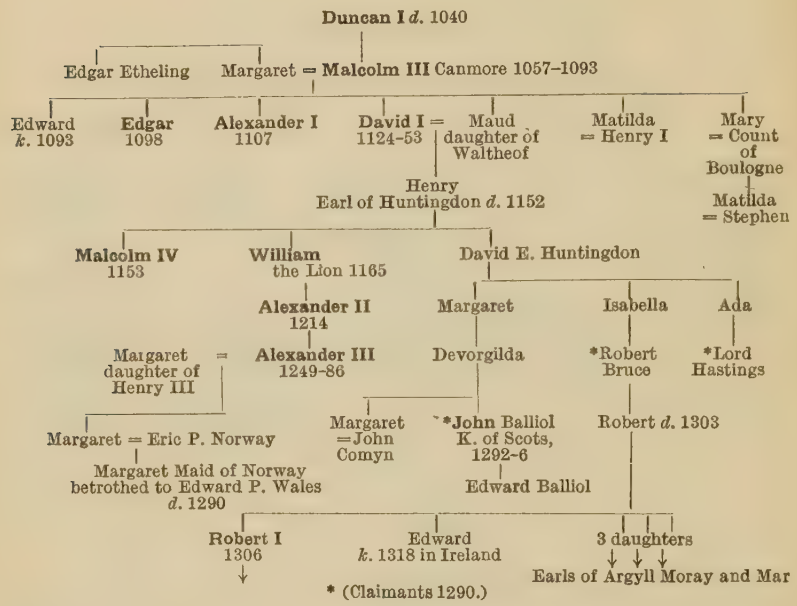
HOUSES DESCENDED FROM EDWARD I


(1) Eleanor of Castile daughter of Ferdinand III
= EDWARD I =
(2) Margaret of France daughter of Phillip III.
(1) = Joan = (2)
Sir Ralph de Monthermer
heiress = Montacute E. Salisbury
heiress = Neville of Salisbury
Gilbert E. Gloucester
heiress = Ralph E. Stafford
Stafford of Stafford and Buckingham (till 1640)
Elizabeth = H. de Bohun E. Hereford
Bohun and Courtenay E. Devon
of Northampton and Hereford
2 heiresses = Henry IV, Thomas of Woodstock
Thomas of Brotherton E. Norfolk
heiress = Mowbray of Nottingham and Norfolk
heiress = Howard of Norfolk and Surrey
Edmund of Woodstock E. of Kent ex. 1330
Joan of Kent = (1) Sir T. Holland
Holland of Kent Huntingdon and Exeter
4 heiresses = Beaufort and Neville

THE RISE AND FALL OF DE LA POLE


Sir William de la Pool (or Pole) of Hull = daughter of John Rotenheryng of Hull
Sir Richard Agent for the Hanse League financier
heiress Baroness Cobham = Sir John Oldcastle
Sir William Mayor of Hull M.P. wool exporter and financier
Michael E. Suffolk Minister of Richard II d. 1389
2 daughters = Scrope of Bolton and Sir. T. Neville
Michael E. Suffolk d. at Harfleur 1415
Michael E. Suffolk k. at Agincourt
William = D. Suffolk k. 1450
Alice Chaucer (? granddaughter of Geoffrey Chaucer)
2 sons k. in French war
daughter = Lord Morley
John D. Suffolk d. 1471 = Elizabeth of York
John E. Lincoln declared heir to the Crown by Richard III k. 1487
Edmund D. Suffolk ex. 1513
Richard k. abroad 1525
Duchy honours etc. granted to Charles Brandon by Henry VIII

KINGS OF SCOTLAND (*a*)



KINGS OF SCOTLAND (*b*)

HOUSE OF STEWART

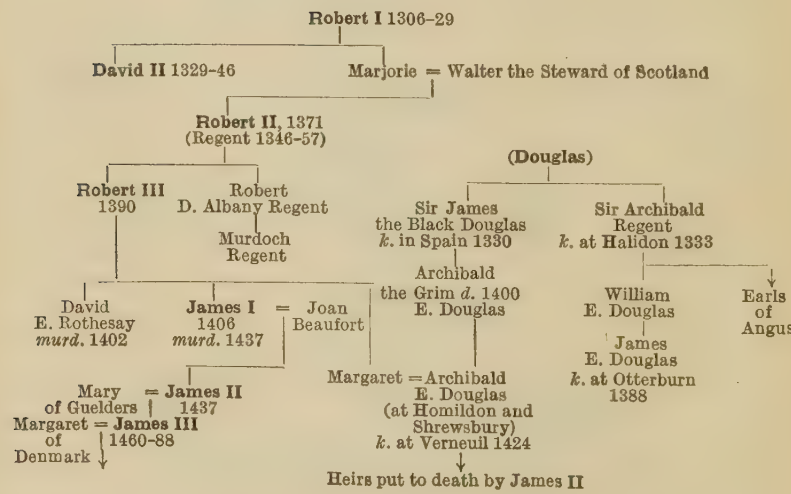

Robert I 1306–29
David II 1329-46
Marjorie = Walter the Steward of Scotland
Robert II, 1371 (Regent 1346-57)
(Douglas)
Robert III 1390
Robert D. Albany Regent
Murdoch Regent
Sir James the Black Douglas k. in Spain 1330
Sir Archibald Regent k. at Halidon 1333
Archibald the Grim d. 1400 E. Douglas
David E. Rothesay murd. 1402
James I 1406 murd. 1437
= Joan Beaufort
William E. Douglas
Earls of Angus
James E. Douglas k. at Otterburn 1388
Mary of Guelders = James II 1437
Margaret = James III 1460-88
of Denmark
Margaret = Archibald E. Douglas (at Homildon and Shrewsbury) k. at Verneuil 1424
Heirs put to death by James II

TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY EVENTS TO ALFRED

Britain		Europe.	
B.C.			
55	Cæsar's first invasion of Britain.		
		B.C.	
		30	Augustus first Roman Emperor.
A.D.			
43–84	Roman conquest.		
61	Boadicea.		
c. 121	Hadrian's Wall, Tyne to Solway.		
208–10	Severus' Wall, restoration.		
286–93	Carausius, "Emperor of Britain."		
		A.D.	
		306	Constantine.
		325	Council of Nicæa.
c. 350–400	Irish, Pictish and Saxon ravages.	*c.* 400	Barbarians begin to overcome the Roman Empire.
409	Roman authority ceases. English Settlement begins.	410	Sack of Rome by Alaric.
429, 447	Visits of Germanus.		
c. 500	Scots settle in Western Caledonia.	*c.* 500	Franks settle in Gaul.
c. 516	British victory at Mons Badonicus [? Bath].	529	St. Benedict's monastery at M. Cassino.
547	Ida King of Northumbria.		
563	Columba at Iona.		
577	Saxon victory at Dyrham.		
597	Mission of Augustine begins. Laws of Ethelbert.	590	Gregory the Great Pope.
c. 613	Battle of Chester.		
617–33	Edwin, King of Northumbria.		
634	Aidan, Bp. of Lindisfarne.		
634–42	Oswald, King of Northumbria.		
till 655	Penda, King of Mercia.		
643–670	Oswy, King of Northumbria.		
664	Synod of Whitby.		
668	Theodore, Archbishop. Cuthbert, Bp. of Lindisfarne. Wilfrid, Bp. of Ripon.	632	Death of Mohammed.
735	Bede died.		
688–726	Ina, King of Wessex. Laws of Ina.		
757–796	Offa, King of Mercia.		
793	The Danes sack Lindisfarne.		
802–839	Egbert, King of Wessex.		
835	Danes defeated at Hingston.		
839–871	Ethelwulf, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred I, Kings of Wessex.		
		700–732	Saracens conquer Spain.
		718–753	Boniface Apostle of the Germans.
		758–814	Charles the Great (Emperor, 800).
		782	Alcuin goes to Frankia.
851	Danes winter in Thanet. Danes subdue Northumbria and East Anglia.	841	Separation of East-Franks, West-Franks, Burgundy and Italy.
		800–900	Ravages of the Northmen.
871	Alfred.	888	Death of last Carling Emperor.

TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS FROM ALFRED

England	Scotland	France	Emperors and Popes
871 Alfred	844 Kenneth McAlpin King of Picts and Scots	800–900 First dukes in Brittany Gascony Aquitaine first Counts of Flanders Anjou	
		840 Robert the Strong founds Duchy of France [Paris]	
899 Edward the Elder	900—942 Constantine		919 Henry the Fowler founds kingdom of Germany
925 Athelstan		911 Rollo founds Duchy of Normandy	
939 Edmund 946 Edred 956 Edwy 959 Edgar 975 Edward 979 Ethelred II } Dunstan		*Caroling Kings of West-Franks till* 987	936–973 Otto I 966 *Emperor*
		House of Capet	
		987 Hugh Capet K. of France	
1013 Sweyn 1016 Edmund II 1016 Canute	1005–1034 Malcolm II	996 Robert	
1035 Harold I	1034 Duncan I	1031 Henry I	
1040 Harthacnut	1040 Macbeth		1039–56 Henry III *Emperor*
1042 Edward the Confessor	1057 Malcolm III		1048–54 Pope Leo IX
1066 Harold II		1060 Philip I	1056–1106 Henry IV *Emperor*
Norman House			1061–73 Pope Alexander I
1066 William the Conqueror			
1087 William II	1093–1097 Donald Bane		1073–85 Pope Gregory VII
	1097 Edgar		1087–99 Pope Urban II
			1095 *First Crusade*
1100 Henry I	1107 Alexander I	1108 Louis VI	1106–1125 Henry V *Emperor*
	1124 David I		

House of Plantagenet

1154 Henry II

1189 Richard I

1199 John

1216 Henry III

1272 Edward I

1307 Edward II

1327 Edward III

1377 Richard II

House of Lancaster

1399 Henry IV

1413 Henry V

1422 Henry VI

House of York

1461 Edward IV

1483 Edward V

1483 Richard III

House of Tudor

1485 Henry VII

1153 Malcolm IV
1165 William I

1214 Alexander II

1249–86 Alexander III

1292 John Balliol
1306 Robert Bruce

1329 David II

House of Stewart

1371 Robert II
1390 Robert III

1406 James I

[1406–24 Albany Regent]

1437 James II

1460 James III

1180 Philip II (Augustus)

1189 *Third Crusade*

1223 Louis VIII
1226 (St.) Louis IX
1270 Philip III (le Hardi)
1285 Philip IV (le Bel)
1314 Louis X
1322 Philip V

House of Valois

1326 Philip VI
1350 John II
1364 Charles V
1380 Charles VI

1422 Charles VII
[1429 Jeanne Darc]

1461 Louis XI

1483 Charles VIII

1152 Frederick I *Emperor*

1154–9 Pope Hadrian IV

1190 Henry VI *Emperor*

1198 Pope Innocent III

1204 *Fourth Crusade*

1208 Otto IV *Emperor*
1212 Frederick II *Emperor*
1273 Rudolf of Hapsburg *Emperor*
1305–75 *Avignon Popes*

1378–1413 *Papal Schism*

1414 Council of Constance
1438 Albert of Hapsburg *Emp. and K.* Hungary and Bohemia

[1453 The Turks take Constantinople]
[1466–77 Charles the Bold D. of Burgundy]

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